

# ANGLO- SOVIET JOURNAL

## CONTENTS

### Special FIVE-YEAR PLAN Issue

The FIFTH  
FIVE-YEAR PLAN



General Comments  
Labour Productivity  
Cultural Amenities  
Living Standards

Siberian Journey  
Soviet Music Today  
An Architect's View  
Life More Abundantly  
*Illustrations*  
"It Isn't True to Life"

International Co-operation

Scientist and Man of Letters (*Review*)

Essays on Negotiation (*Review*)

Maurice Dobb

G. R. Barker

D. T. Richnell

Campbell Creighton

Miles Malleson

Bernard Stevens

John Pinckheard

Eleanor Fox

"Vicky"

B. Rurikov

Andrew Rothstein

J. D. Bernal, F.R.S.

D. N. Pritt, Q.C.

AND BOOK REVIEWS, ETC.

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## CONTENTS

|  | <i>Page</i>                  |
|--|------------------------------|
| <b>THE USSR OFFERS INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION</b> . . . . .  | <i>Andrew Rothstein</i> 2    |
| <b>THE FIFTH FIVE-YEAR PLAN</b>  |                              |
| General Comments . . . . .   | <i>Maurice Dobb</i> 5        |
| The Labour Force and Labour Productivity . . . . .   | <i>G. R. Barker</i> 9        |
| Living Standards Today and Tomorrow . . . . .  | <i>Campbell Creighton</i> 12 |
| Cultural Amenities . . . . .   | <i>D. T. Richnell</i> 16     |
| "TYPICALNESS" . . . . .  | <i>G. Malenkov</i> 20        |
| "IT ISN'T TRUE TO LIFE" . . . . .  | <i>B. Rurikov</i> 21         |
| <b>SIBERIAN JOURNEY</b> . . . . .  | <i>Miles Malleson</i> 28     |
| <b>CULTURAL DELEGATION TO THE USSR, September 1952</b>   |                              |
| 1. Soviet Music Today . . . . .  | <i>Bernard Stevens</i> 33    |
| 2. An Architect's View . . . . .   | <i>John Pinckheard</i> 35    |
| 3. Life More Abundantly . . . . .  | <i>Eleanor Fox</i> 39        |
| Illustrations . . . . .  | <i>"Vicky"</i> 39-41         |
| <b>BOOK REVIEWS</b> . . . . .  | 42                           |
| <i>(A Nest of the Gentry; Avicenna—Scientist and Philosopher; Conditioned Reflex Therapy; Etymological Dictionary of the Russian Language; Fathers and Sons; Freedom and the Tragic Life; Negotiating with the Russians; Picture Book of Russia; Russia—a History; Russia's Lomonosov; Sergei M. Eisenstein; Spinoza in Soviet Philosophy; The Jews in Russia (Vol. 2); Ulanova and the Development of the Modern Russian Ballet. And: Kniga O Vkusnoi I Zdorovoi Pishche; Sovetsky Gosudarstvenny Apparat.)</i> |                              |
| <b>PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED</b> . . . . .   | 53                           |
| <b>SCR NOTES</b> . . . . .   | 54                           |

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Organ of the Society for Cultural Relations with the USSR

# The USSR Offers International Co-operation

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ONE part of the proceedings at the recent Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union which has received singularly little attention from the British Press was the clear and unambiguous offer of co-operation between the Soviet Union and capitalist States. The *Economist*, for example, while devoting a number of pages to critical discussion of the Congress, forgot to mention this feature

There is no excuse for this blindness. As was pointed out in our last issue,\* the Draft Directives for the Fifth Five-Year Plan, published in August, already made it clear by their provision for increased commercial shipbuilding and for extension of the principal ports like Riga, Leningrad, Klaipeda (Memel), Odessa, Novorossisk, Murmansk and others that the Soviet Union is looking for an expansion of overseas trade. The directives for a big increase in output of traditional Soviet export commodities like timber (56 per cent), oil (85 per cent), dairy butter (72 per cent), wheat (55 to 65 per cent), flax (40 to 45 per cent), show that the USSR will have plenty to send to customers prepared for trade "on the basis of the principles of equality and mutual advantage".

The directives were adopted unanimously by the Congress on October 10. Malenkov, on behalf of the party's Central Committee, had already, in his report on October 5, stated quite explicitly that the Soviet Union wants to see an expansion of international trade and "the restoration of the single international market", broken in two by the attempted economic blockade of the USSR and the People's Democracies in recent years—a policy which has injured the blockading powers more than the blockaded.

The USSR, said Malenkov, wishes to expand commercial relations with all countries, "irrespective of the difference in social systems". Such a policy "can keep the industries in the industrially developed countries running for many years to come, can ensure the sale of products of which one country has an abundance to other countries, can help to raise the economy of the underdeveloped countries, and thereby bring about lasting economic co-operation". Readers of the *ANGLO-SOVIET JOURNAL* will be aware that, as recently as last April, the Soviet Union publicly offered to raise its trade turnover with the capitalist countries by 1955 to a figure at least double what it is this year: and in particular to increase Anglo-Soviet trade to over £220 millions per annum† (in the first six months of 1952 it was running at the level of £4 millions British exports and £45 millions re-exports per annum to the USSR, with £77 millions imports per annum from the USSR.)

But at this point the question of mutual advantage arises. It cannot seriously be argued that the Soviet Union must supply to capitalist countries what they require in the way of raw materials and foodstuffs, but should content itself with consumer goods or a few colonial raw materials from them, instead of the machinery which it requires to accelerate the development of its resources beyond the high level they have been planned to reach in 1955. Yet when it tries to place orders for such machinery, it is told that this is "war potential" and "strategic exports", which it must not get: would it not like textiles or braces, furniture or ladies' suspenders?

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\* Vol. XIII, No. 3, Autumn 1952.

† Vol. XIII, No. 2, Summer 1952.

It is time that this nonsensical approach to international trade was understood for what it is—an insincere pretext for maintaining artificial restrictions and perpetuating ill-will. It is time to understand that (as several speakers emphasised and illustrated at the Congress) the USSR is in a position to produce, both for itself and for its friends, every kind of machine it requires, and that its technicians are not standing still in this respect. As Minister of Shipbuilding Malyshev reported, the Soviet engineering industry in the last three years has produced annually some 500/550 new types of machines, including 340 new types of general machine tool and over 1,000 special types. Consequently it is an illusion to imagine that, by refusing to export machines which the Soviet Union wants, anyone can hamper its planned economic development, or even, in an extremity, its war potential.

The case of machine tools is particularly apposite. In 1940 the USSR possessed some 710,000 of them, of which the Germans destroyed or made away with a quarter. War-time output and imports did not entirely make up for this loss. The post-war Five-Year Plan provided that, by 1950, the stock should rise to 1,300,000. From the report on the fulfilment of that Plan, published last year, we learnt that the plan was over-fulfilled, the stock having “more than doubled”. From Malenkov’s speech at the Congress it is seen that the stock of machine tools in 1952 was already 120 per cent above that of 1940, many of them far more productive types than ever existed before. When we study the reports of Soviet aid given to People’s Democracies like Poland, Rumania, Bulgaria and others, we find that machine tools (with other highly productive heavy industrial equipment) are being delivered to them in large numbers. And this after a war which, Malenkov stated, “had retarded our industrial development for eight or nine years, that is approximately two five-year plans”.

To reject normal commercial relations with the Soviet Union, in face of these facts, means cutting off one’s nose to spite one’s face : more precisely, allowing political prejudice to injure the interests of one’s own people.

The Soviet Union, as has been seen, does not propose to follow this curmudgeonly policy. It is not the Soviet Union’s fault that 80 per cent of its foreign trade in 1952—now three times as large in volume as in 1940—was done with the People’s Democracies, China and the German Democratic Republic (the figures given by Minister for Trade Mikoyan in his speech at the Congress). The Soviet Union does not desire to shut off trade with the capitalist countries—and Mikoyan quoted Finland as an example. Its trade with the USSR in 1951 was nine times that of 1938—and by the end of next year it is to be double that of 1951, under the five-year trade agreement recently signed !

Peaceful trade would open the door to wider co-operation. On this Malenkov was quite specific. Soviet policy, he said, “is based on the premise that the peaceful co-existence *and co-operation* of capitalism and communism are quite possible, provided there is a mutual desire to co-operate, readiness to carry out commitments, and adherence to the principle of equal rights and non-interference in the internal affairs of other States”. He mentioned in particular Britain, the USA, France and other countries ; the USSR, he said, “is still ready to *co-operate* with these States with a view to promoting adherence to peaceful international standards and ensuring a lasting and durable peace”. While convinced that, “in peaceful competition with capitalism”, socialist economy will continue to prove its superiority, “we have not the least intention of forcing our ideology or our economic system upon anybody”.

In a passage quoted earlier, we have seen that Malenkov indicated the value of expanding trade as a means to “raise the economy of the under-

developed countries". He also referred to the well-known Soviet proposals for banning the atom bomb, reducing armaments, and a five-power peace pact. But these practical forms of co-operation need only be the first. It is pertinent to recall the terms of the pledge adopted by the USA and the USSR on June 11, 1942, for agreed action after the war—

"directed to the expansion, by appropriate international and domestic measures, of production, employment and the exchange and consumption of goods, which are the material foundations of the liberty and welfare of all peoples; to the elimination of all forms of discriminatory treatment in international commerce, and to the reduction of tariffs and other trade barriers".

The Soviet Union unquestionably stands ready for the fulfilment of this programme.

That is the unambiguous message of the Moscow Congress to all nations.

**Andrew Rothstein**

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The following pamphlets on the Nineteenth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, published by the Foreign Languages Publishing House, are now available through Collet's Holdings Ltd., and from bookshops.

BERIA, L.—Speech at the 19th Congress. (1d.)

BULGANIN, N.—Speech at the 19th Congress. (1d.)

MALENKOV, G.—Report to the 19th Congress on  
Work of the Central Committee. (6d.)

SABUROV, M.—Report on the Directives of the  
19th Congress relating to the Fifth  
Five-Year Plan. (4d.)

STALIN, J. V.—Speech at the 19th Congress. (1d.)  
Economic Problems of Socialism  
in the USSR. (6d.)



# The Fifth Five-Year Plan

## GENERAL COMMENTS

AFTER Mr. Crankshaw and others had assured us that planning in the USSR was a thing of the past and *Gosplan* dead and buried\*, it is perhaps not surprising that the appearance of the fifth Five-Year Plan should have taken the wind out of many journalists' sails on both sides of the Atlantic and left them at a loss for comment. Perhaps, to dissipate any lingering air of surprise and mystery surrounding the matter, one should explain that the appearance of the Plan more than eighteen months after the termination of the previous one is not without precedent. The second Five-year Plan was not completed and publicly announced for more than a year after the end of the first Plan—until the Seventeenth Party Congress, which met at the end of January and early in February 1934. If one wishes to hunt for possible explanations in the present case, there are quite a number to hand. Uncertainties in the international situation could hardly have been more numerous; and the approach of the Nineteenth Party Congress, with important policy discussions preceding it, afforded a plausible reason for postponing until then any final shaping of the blueprint for the quinquennium.

Commentators in this country seem to have been genuinely surprised by the absence of any signs of the strain of war preparations in the Plan, and by the size of the provision in it for an increase in consumption. The latter is certainly striking enough, as we shall see, especially when viewed against the background of the substantial advances in the standard of living over recent years, to which both available statistics and the impressions of visitors of all political shades bear witness.

The two central features of the new Plan (covering the years 1951 to 1955 inclusive) are the general rate of increase of industrial production, which is to proceed at an annual (compound) rate of 12%, or 72% over the quinquennium as a whole, and the relationship between the rates of growth of the two departments of industry concerned respectively with the manufacture of capital goods and of consumer goods (means of production and means of consumption, in the terminology of Marx's famous 'reproduction-schema' in Volume 2 of *Capital*). The overall rate of growth is more modest than in the previous quinquennium, when it was 88% for 1945 to 1950, and nearly double that increase if we take the five years from 1946 (the year of intensive reconversion) to 1951; the annual rate of increase exceeding 20% for the later years, from 1947 onward. It is also lower than the average annual rate of growth achieved between 1928 and 1940 (which was 18.3%). It is, however, only a little lower than that provided for in the third Five-Year Plan.

Even so, this rate of growth is 50% above that attained by capitalist countries in the past during exceptional boom periods, such as Japan between 1907 and 1913, USA between 1885 and 1889, and the UK in the immediate post-war years. It is between three and four times the average rate of industrial growth in the USA between 1899 and 1937.

As regards the relative rates of growth of capital goods and consumer goods, it is noteworthy that the disparity between these is much less than it

\* Cp. his reference to "... finally clear that no more *Piatiletka* are to be expected and that the whole principle of balanced central planning has been thrown overboard" (*Observer*, 4.11.51).

was in any of the pre-war Plans. While the lead enjoyed by the former is maintained (cp. the reference in Stalin's *Economic Problems of Socialism* to a "relatively higher rate of the production of means of production" as a necessary preliminary condition to the "transition to communism"), the disparity between the two quinquennial rates of growth is only one between an 80% and a 65% increase respectively; whereas between 1929 and 1940 the output of the former grew at more than double the rate of the latter. In this respect it is also dissimilar to the (unfinished) third Plan before the war, even if in overall rate of growth it is not very dissimilar thereto: for the third Plan maintained a fairly substantial disparity between the rates of growth of the two main departments of industry—namely, between 107% and 72% respectively.

If we take individual commodities for which quantity figures are given, we find that basic metals, fuel and power are listed for increases close to the average for industry in general; the exceptions being coal, the increase-figure for which is lower than in previous Plans (although that for oil is correspondingly higher than in recent years), and certain non-ferrous metals, which are scheduled for exceptionally high rates of increase. The quinquennial increases provided for in these cases are listed below; and it can be seen that the unweighted average of the first six items on the list is just under 70%.

#### Increases of Planned 1955 Output over Output of 1950

|                  |     |     |     |     |                |     |           |     |      |
|------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|----------------|-----|-----------|-----|------|
| Pig-iron         | ... | ... | ... | 76% | Refined Copper | ... | ...       | ... | 90%  |
| Steel            | ... | ... | ... | 62% | Lead           | ... | ...       | ... | 170% |
| Rolled Metal     | ... | ... | ... | 64% | Aluminium      | ... | (minimum) | ... | 160% |
| Coal             | ... | ... | ... | 43% | Zinc           | ... | ...       | ... | 150% |
| Electrical Power | ... | ... | ... | 80% | Nickel         | ... | ...       | ... | 53%  |
| Oil              | ... | ... | ... | 85% | Tin            | ... | ...       | ... | 80%  |

It is perhaps hardly necessary to point out that these percentage increases represent much larger *absolute* annual increases than was the case during the pre-war decade. Last year's increase in steel, for example, over 1950 represented nearly 4 million tons, which is almost equal to the total steel output of the country in 1928; the annual increase in coal of recent years has been around 24 million tons, that of oil between 4 and 5 million tons. Since the 1950 steel output was 27.6 million tons, the quinquennial percentage growth cited above means a 1955 plan-target of 44.7 million tons; and since the 1950 coal output was 264 million tons the 1955 plan-target is 373 million tons. The equivalent target figure for oil is 70 million tons and for electricity 162 milliard kilowatt hours. Already steel production has attained a level approximately equal to the combined output of Great Britain, France, Belgium and Sweden; while output of electricity is greater than that of Great Britain and France combined.

Engineering output is to continue to increase at a higher rate than basic metals (other than non-ferrous) and fuel (namely, a 100% increase approximately over the five years), although at a more relaxed tempo than previously.\* Certain types of engineering products, however, are scheduled for high rates of increase, such as steam and hydro-turbines and boilers, equipment for the oil industry, and large metal-cutting lathes, precision instruments and high-precision machine tools, also "apparatus for automatic control of technological processes". Motors and tractors, on the other hand, are to increase by no more than 20%. In this connection it is to be noted that the output-rate already achieved in their case is fairly high as a ratio to the existing "park" of motors and tractors (motor production, including lorries, is esti-

\* This may partly be due to the changed valuation of some kinds of engineering products in the new 1950 prices (by comparison with the old 1926-7 prices); but it does not seem likely that this purely "statistical effect" is of great importance here.



mated to have approached an annual rate of three-quarters of a million by the end of 1950, and tractor output to be more than 100,000 compared with a tractor "park" of rather more than half a million),\* and despite the need that still remains for them this output-rate is apparently judged sufficient (for the time being, at least) to replace and extend the existing "park".

In view of the increased house-building programme for the coming years, it is interesting to note that building materials are to be increased considerably more than the average, e.g. cement by 120%, bricks by 130% and polished glass by 300%. Investment in housing construction by the State is to be correspondingly doubled by comparison with the post-war quinquennium. Products of the chemical industry which are listed (mineral fertilisers, soda and synthetic rubber—having "the highest rates of growth in the chemical industry") are to increase by percentages ranging from 80% to 88%.

The rates of increase for consumer goods which are specifically mentioned are as follows :

#### Increases of Planned 1955 Output over Output of 1950

|                         |     |                      |                         |
|-------------------------|-----|----------------------|-------------------------|
| Paper ... ..            | 46% | Fish ... ..          | 58%                     |
| Cotton Textiles ... ..  | 61% | Butter ... ..        | 72%                     |
| Woollen Textiles ... .. | 54% | Vegetable Oil ... .. | 77%                     |
| Leather Footwear ... .. | 55% | Tinned Goods ... ..  | 101%                    |
| Granulated Sugar ... .. | 78% | Furniture ... ..     | "Not less than 3 times" |
| Meat ... ..             | 92% |                      |                         |

Among other consumer goods mentioned in connection with increases in retail sales (State and co-operative) the following additional commodities are mentioned :

|   |      |   |                 |
|---|------|---|-----------------|
| Tea ... ..                                  | 100% | Furniture ... ..  | 200%            |
| Wines ... ..                                | 100% | Domestic Hardware ... ..  | 150%            |
| Beer ... ..                                 | 80%  | Sewing Machines ... ..  | 140%            |
| Clothing ... ..                             | 80%  | Radio and Television Sets ... ..                                      | 100%            |
| Cotton, Wool, Silk and Linen Fabrics ... .. | 70%  | Watches and Clocks ... ..   | 102%            |
| Footwear ... ..                             | 80%  | Household Refrigerators, Washing Machines, and Vacuum Cleaners ... .. | "Several times" |
| Socks and Stockings ... ..                  | 100% | "Output of public catering establishments" ... ..                     | 80%             |
| Knitted Goods ... ..                        | 120% |   |                 |
| Bicycles ... ..                             | 250% |   |                 |

Evidently the grudging admission of the Diplomatic Correspondent of *The Times* that the new Plan provides for "some small" rise in consumption was a piece of studied understatement.

Regarding agriculture, no general value-figure is given for the increase in output as a whole. The percentage increases for the main crops are given as follows :

|                         |          |                               |          |
|-------------------------|----------|-------------------------------|----------|
| Grain ... ..            | 40—50%   | Livestock :                   |          |
| Including Wheat ... ..  | 55—65%   | Beef and Dairy Cattle ... ..  | 18—20%   |
| Cotton ... ..           | 55—65%   | Sheep ... ..                  | 60—62%   |
| Flax ... ..             | 40—50%   | Pigs ... ..                   | 45—50%   |
| Sugar Beet ... ..       | 65—75%   | Horses ... ..                 | 10—12%   |
| Potatoes ... ..         | 40—45%   | Poultry in Coll. Farms ... .. | 200—250% |
| Sunflower Seeds ... ..  | 50—60%   | Livestock Products :          |          |
| Fodder Crops ... ..     | 100—200% | Meat and Fats ... ..          | 80—90%   |
| Including Hay ... ..    | 80—90%   | Milk ... ..                   | 45—50%   |
| Tubers and Roots ... .. | 200—300% | Wool ... ..                   | 100—150% |

\* This ratio (of annual output to "park") of between one-quarter and one-fifth in the case of tractors compares with a ratio of one sixth in the USA and one-tenth in France, and in the UK a ratio of one-eighth of retained output to "park" (i.e. retained after allowing for exports).

It will be noticed here that the increases of livestock products are greater than the corresponding increases of livestock per head. This is to be explained presumably by the fact that (in Malenkov's words) "the main task in the development of livestock farming continues to be that of increasing the number of commonly owned livestock in collective and State farms, with a simultaneous considerable rise in productivity." The quality of animals in collective ownership, and their yields, is apt to be superior in considerable degree (e.g. in fatness, milk and wool yields, and so on) to those in individual ownership; so that a rise in the proportion of the whole which is in collective ownership will raise the output of livestock products more rapidly than would at first appear from the livestock figures themselves—a fact often overlooked by Western commentators and critics.

In general, the increases of agricultural production are intended to come mainly from increases in yield rather than from extension of acreage (to the extent of 90% in the case of grain, 50% in cotton, and 60% in sugar beet). The Congress Directives on the Plan state that "the main task in the sphere of agriculture still remains the raising of the yields of all agricultural crops"; and Malenkov (after claiming that "the grain problem, which in the past was regarded as our most acute and gravest problem, has been solved, solved definitely and finally") said: "Now that the pre-war crop area has been reached and exceeded, the only correct course to follow in raising agricultural output is to increase yields per hectare to the utmost." Similarly in industry it is intended that the main part of the increase in output shall come from a rise of labour productivity, which is planned to increase by approximately 50%, while the rise in number of "factory and office workers" is set at approximately 15%. In the previous quinquennium it is true that the increase in numbers employed was greater than had been forecast in the Plan. Nevertheless, although productivity in building and construction seems to have increased by less than was budgeted for (23% against 40%—which may explain the inflated employment figure), the rise of productivity in industry fully achieved the fourth Plan target (namely 36% above 1940).<sup>\*</sup> According to Malenkov, "labour productivity in industry increased 50% between 1940 and 1951", and two-thirds of the rise in industrial output over this period was due to this rise in productivity.

Of constructional projects in the field of electrification and transport and irrigation there is not room here to speak. In addition to large hydro-electric projects on the Volga and the Kama and the Irtysh, a start is to be made with the ambitious Angara river scheme in the Lake Baikal region. The Southern Siberian railway is to be completed (the link between Akmolinsk and Abakan), and a branch line from the old Trans-Siberian northward from Krasnoyarsk to Yeniseisk. The canal system connecting the Volga with the Baltic will be improved to permit passage of larger ships and to complete the Baltic—Black Sea waterway as a traffic route; and the river Kama (which connects the Volga with the northern Urals) will be deepened. To pass from such schemes to minor, though not insignificant, details, one might close by drawing attention to such paragraphs at the end of the section on *Trade, Transport and Communications* as those which state that "the length of permanent inter-urban passenger bus routes will be approximately doubled"; "taxi services will be established in all big towns"; and "the capacities of any telephone exchanges are to be increased by 30—35%".

**Maurice Dobb**

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<sup>\*</sup> The actual figure given in the Report on the Results of the Fourth Plan was 37%.

## THE LABOUR-FORCE AND LABOUR-PRODUCTIVITY IN THE FIFTH FIVE-YEAR PLAN

THE Draft Directives of the Fifth Five-Year Plan for the Development of the National Economy of the USSR, which have been adopted by the 19th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, have set before the Soviet people the task of raising the gross production of Soviet industry by 1955 to a level of some 70% above that of 1950.

The fulfilment of all production programmes in a planned economy depends upon the planned provision of adequate supplies of labour, in terms of both quantity and quality—upon the increase in the numbers of persons available for work and upon their productivity.

The directives call for an increase in the numbers of factory and office workers of about 15% above the level of 1950 by 1955, or, in absolute terms, of about 45.1 million persons compared with 39.2 million at the end of 1950 and 40.8 million at the end of 1951. Of this total, it appears that 10 to 11 million will represent *industrial factory workers* by 1955, compared with just over 9 million in 1950.

The directives say nothing of how the numbers of persons employed will increase relatively, as between different spheres of the economy, but it seems probable that there will be no sharp change from the pattern which has become clear in the last few years, i.e. that 78-80% of the net increase go to the branches of material production and transport, and 20-22% to work in cultural activity, trade and public services.

### *Net increase in numbers employed 1949-51 (million)*

|   | 1949 | 1950 | 1951           | 1949-51        |
|---|------|------|----------------|----------------|
| <b>BRANCHES</b>                                       |      |      |                |                |
| Industry, agriculture*, building, transport ... ..    | 1.40 | 1.60 | 1.25           | 4.25           |
|   |      |      | nearly         | nearly         |
| Education, research, medicine ...                     | 0.25 | 0.30 | 0.25           | 0.80           |
| Trade, housing maintenance, municipal services ... .. | 0.15 | 0.10 | more than 0.10 | more than 0.35 |
| ALL   | 1.80 | 2.00 | 1.60           | 5.40           |

The total increase in the numbers of employed persons planned for the period 1951-55 of 5.9 million compares with a planned increase of 4.3 million in the fourth Five-Year Plan. In fact, the increase in the period 1946-50 was about 10 million factory and office workers.

The directives for the new Plan make special reference to improving the *quality* of the training of young skilled workers in the system of the State Labour Reserves, and to the continued application of the system of individual and group training of workers and of organising refresher courses for raising the qualifications of workers at their place of work. During the recently completed Five-Year Plan, 3,400,000 young workers were trained in the Factory, Mining and Trade Schools of the State Labour Reserves. These were formed before the war to provide a stable base for the replenishment and planned en-

\* State sector only.

largement of the labour force, and have been said to represent the basic source on which industry draws for its requirements of manpower ; but the numbers graduating each year have of late been reduced, and in 1951 represented nearly 23% of the net increase in those employed, as against just over 40% in 1949. This is probably due to the influx of workers through other channels—mainly from the countryside—in numbers greater than originally planned for. On the other hand, the training of new workers in the factories by individual and team instruction and on short courses while at work, together with similar training aimed at raising the skills of existing workers in the fourth Five-Year Plan, was on a wider scale than originally foreseen. Instead of the 21.6 million who were to have undergone this training, 31 million in fact did so. In 1951, as in the last year of the fourth Plan, 7 million workers were covered. This suggests that since 1946 not only all the newly inducted workers received some training, but nearly the whole labour force has been through some form of refresher course or other.

The system of organised countryside recruiting of workers on contract to work for a stipulated period of time in some branch of industry, after falling into disuse during the war, was renewed afterwards, and having apparently justified itself—particularly in ensuring stable supplies of workers for key industries—is likely to be continued in the current five-year period and thereafter.

The productivity of labour—the average output per worker per year—taken with the number of workers available, determines the scale of production. The planned increase in gross industrial production of about 70%, together with the increase in the number of industrial workers planned, assumes an increase of some 50% in the productivity of labour in industry as a whole in the period 1951-55 compared with a 36% planned increase (and a 37% actual increase) by 1950 over the 1940 level. This probably meant an increase over the 1945 level of something like 70%, in view of the overall fall during the war. It must be remembered that every 1% increase in productivity in the current five-year period represents in absolute terms nearly 60% as much increase in production again as in the last.

If we compare the level of the productivity of labour planned for 1955 with that at the beginning of Soviet planning, it appears that the level is to be some six times higher, as measured in official 1926-27 prices for the period up to 1950, though these prices probably introduce an upward bias. The extent of this, however, cannot be accurately determined.

*Index of the productivity of labour in industry*  
(1928=100)

| 1928 | 1932 | 1940 | 1946 | 1950 | 1955 (Plan) |
|------|------|------|------|------|-------------|
| 100  | 125  | 305  | 250  | 415  | 620         |

In some branches of the economy, the planned increase in productivity is higher. For example, in building, productivity is to rise 55%, so as to wipe out the losses resulting from an under-fulfilment of the fourth Five-Year Plan (a 23% increase, instead of a 40%, over the 1940 level by 1950).

The engineering industry in recent years has shown increases in productivity well above the average and it is to be expected that this too will continue in the future.

This increase in output per worker per year is primarily due to increases in hourly productivity, and not to increases, it appears, in hours worked, except in so far as better organisation can cut out hold-ups in production and thus wasted time. The eight-hour day and six-day week, introduced shortly before the war, will apparently continue throughout this Plan, and thus help to make up for the loss of time on civil production during the war.

The rise in the productivity of labour will mainly be determined, then, by increases in the level of mechanisation of work-processes and by the fuller and more efficient use of equipment. The current Plan sets the task of "completing, in the main, the mechanisation of heavy and labour-consuming work in industry and building". This necessitates a rise in the amount of power (electric and other) available per worker in industry, and the elimination of hand-work in many auxiliary and subsidiary processes which still remain unmechanised in branches where the *main* processes are already mechanised, as well as an all-round rise in the amount of mechanical equipment available in branches whose priorities for the getting of such equipment have not been high.

In the last Five-Year Plan the basic production facilities of industry rose to a level by 1950 stated to be 58% above that of 1940, while the amount of electric power available per worker rose correspondingly by 50%, and the number of machine tools by more than 100%. In some branches of industry the level of mechanisation of basic processes reached is already very high. Thus, in the coal industry, the hewing, stripping, removal and underground hauling of coal was fully mechanised by the end of the fourth Five-Year Plan, and work is currently proceeding on the completion of the mechanisation of loading and surface work, as well as on the development of automatic and remote-control methods, and on the improvement of the organisation of work so as to enable full use to be made of the new technical equipment. In the timber industry, too, though the Plan for the supply of mechanical equipment was over-fulfilled, full use is not yet being made of this equipment, and the main problem in the current Plan is one of improved organisation. In a number of other branches (e.g. building) the main problem continues to be that of increasing the supply of new mechanical equipment.

Soviet industry is well placed, as far as the development of technique is concerned, in that the scale on which proposals for rationalisation and inventions come from engineers, technicians and workers is very large and is increasing. In the last three years (1949-51), it has been officially stated that more than 450,000, 600,000 and 700,000 such suggestions respectively have been made and put into effect.

The rise in the level of technical equipment of industry makes the raising of the qualifications of workers, technicians and engineers an extremely important task, for complicated equipment and complex processes demand highly skilled workers and engineers with advanced scientific training.

The directives for the new Five-Year Plan therefore demand the introduction of polytechnical training in secondary schools, and stipulate an increase in the output of specialists of all kinds by higher and secondary technical educational institutions of 30-35% in the period 1951-55, with an approximately 100% increase in the graduation from higher educational institutions of specialists for the main branches of industry, and for building and agriculture. During the fourth Plan, the national economy received 652,000 specialists with a higher education and 1,278,000 specialists with a secondary education, the number of specialists by 1950 being 84% above that of 1940. In 1951, 201,000 specialists with a higher education and 262,000 with a secondary technical education took up work. It will be seen that the rate of increase in the numbers of those graduating with a higher education is markedly more rapid.

The raising of the productivity of labour in the USSR is indivisibly connected with the development of socialist emulation. Practically no undertaking by a group of workers in competition is made without the inclusion of a target for the raising of the productivity of labour above that of the official plan. Since more than 90% of all the factory and office workers in the USSR take part in socialist emulation, and have the full backing of Trade Union, Party and



economic organisations in this, the force which this movement represents for the fulfilment and over-fulfilment of plans is considerable, and is an important method of eliminating such obstacles and "bottlenecks" as might hold up a rise in labour-productivity. The spreading of the experience of the most advanced Stakhanovites among all the workers, which took on an organised planned character in the last Five-Year Plan period, is likely, as it becomes more mature, to lead to increasingly positive results in the present five-year period.

The wage system, as evolved in the Soviet Union, is an essential incentive apparatus in the stimulating of higher productivity, in that the higher a worker's output the higher are his monetary earnings. Much ingenuity has gone into devising the most effective bonus systems for this purpose. It appears likely that any increases in money-wage rates in this Plan will be mainly differential increases made to improve this system further, while rises in real wages as a whole will continue to be made through price reductions.

Of course, monetary incentives are far from being the only incentive to increased productivity. To an ever-increasing extent, the role of honour, of public recognition of services rendered to the community, is gaining ground. The exhibition of portraits of leading workers outside factories, articles about them in the press, talks on the wireless about their achievements, their election to office as outstanding public figures, the awarding of medals, orders and titles to them—all these contribute to make the leaders of the movement for higher output figures whom young people aspire to take as their models. While at this stage of development of Soviet society financial gain as a spur to increased productivity is indispensable, it can be said that the incentive of conscience has been constantly increasing in importance, and will continue to do so in the current Five-Year Plan.

The directives, of course, only lay down the main lines of development, and contain no detailed data. The publication of the law on the new Five-Year Plan will probably make possible a fuller examination of developments in this field at a later date.

**G. R. Barker**

## **LIVING STANDARDS TODAY AND TOMORROW**

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THE aim of the fifth Five-Year Plan of the Soviet Union is to increase the national income "not less than 60% in the five-year period". In terms of personal income, it is planned to raise the real wages of factory and office workers "by not less than 35%" and to increase the incomes of collective farmers, both in cash and kind, "by not less than 40% (in cash terms)". Translated into pounds, shillings and pence, this is equivalent to seven to eight shillings in the pound (and a pound of stable purchasing power).

The Soviet people are now used to rapid improvements in their standard of living. At the end of the post-war Five-Year Plan average real wages were 43% higher than in 1940; but the actual rise in real wages during the plan period was much greater, because of the substantial decline in Soviet living standards during the war. In 1948 alone real wages doubled as a result of the abolition of rationing, of the first price reductions, and of higher earnings. In the pre-war period also real wages had doubled in the course of the first two

Five-Year Plans. In Soviet experience, therefore, a plan to increase real wages by 35% in five years is modest and practicable.

Soviet attention is in fact focused on an even more long-term prospect, that of doubling the present standards of living, as one of the requisites for the transition from their present socialist system to the abundance required for communist distribution "from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs".

The source of the planned increase in real income is higher productivity of labour, leading on the one hand to higher earnings and on the other, through reduced costs of production, to lower prices. The aim of the current Five-Year Plan is to increase the productivity of labour in industry by 50%, in the building industry by 55%, and in agriculture by 40%. As a result, production costs are expected to fall 25% in industry, 20% on building sites, 15% on the railways, 23% in retail trade, and 25% in agricultural machine-and-tractor stations.

Stalin formulates the basic economic law of socialism as "the securing of the maximum satisfaction of the constantly rising material and cultural requirements of the whole of society through the continuous expansion and perfection of socialist production on the basis of higher techniques".\* This law is not only the aim of Soviet planning, it is a law with which Soviet planning must conform if it is to be successful. "As to economic planning, it can achieve positive results only if two conditions are observed: (a) if it correctly reflects the requirements of the law of balanced development of the national economy, and (b) if it conforms in every way to the requirements of the basic economic law of socialism."†

This other condition for successful economic planning—conformity with the law of balanced development—is the clue to the emphasis that has at various times been laid on the development of various branches of Soviet industry, and on the supposed "shift" towards consumer goods.

It is often forgotten that the standards of living in industrial countries like the USA, Great Britain, France and Germany are closely related to the level of development of their heavy and engineering industries, and that the amount of steel available per head of population is as important an index of a modern standard of living as the amount of butter or sugar.

It has even been suggested—with a contempt for economics and the facts of Soviet life that is truly remarkable—that the present level of Soviet industrial development has been reached at the expense of the Soviet consumer. Recent American official propaganda has even insinuated that the standard of living of the Soviet worker today is worse than that of Russian labour in 1913.

In 1913, 58% of the Russian economy was agricultural and only 42% industrial. Within industry, two-thirds of the annual output was of consumer goods. Means of production made up only one-third. With such a balance of industry it was impossible to expand consumer production without expanding production of producers' goods even more. Not only did production have to be increased all round to bring the *per capita* production of both consumer and producers' goods up to the level of, say, France, but heavy industry had to expand even more in order to correct the proportions between the industries. In 1913, for example, the engineering industry turned out 6.8% of the products of large-scale industry, and power stations 0.2%; by 1938 electric power con-

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\* ECONOMIC PROBLEMS OF SOCIALISM IN THE USSR. By J. V. Stalin. (FLPH, 6d.) P. 45.

† *Ibid.* p. 46

stituted 2.13% (a tenfold change) of industrial production ; by 1940 the output of the engineering industry made up 31%. The balance between industry and agriculture had been changed, and the predominance of agriculture had been ended. At the end of 1937 industry constituted 77.4% of the national economy and agriculture 22.4% ; and by 1940 the share of heavy industry was 60% of all industrial output. This ratio between consumer and producer goods has been roughly stabilised ; in the fifth Plan the ratio between the expansion planned for the two categories is about the same, rates of increase being approximately 55% for producers' goods to 45% for consumer goods, giving the slight emphasis on heavy industry which is necessary for continually expanding socialist production.

The scale of Soviet production has reached a magnitude at which the size of the annual increment to production in certain branches is sufficient for balanced development of the economy, and the *rate of expansion* can be allowed to fall.

An annual rate of expansion of 11% is planned for the consumer industries, compared with 13% for heavy industry. This compares with 9% and 23.5% respectively in the plan for the year 1941. Gross industrial production is planned to increase by 70% during the five-year period.

Within the consumer industries, textile and clothing production will expand at less than the rate for industry as a whole, the food industries at slightly more than the rate, and the light engineering and furniture industries at much more than the rate. Great emphasis is laid on expanding production of durable consumer goods, furniture, radio sets, television sets, bicycles, sewing machines, domestic refrigerators, and so on.

| % Increase over 1950 of Planned Production for 1955 |       | % Increase over 1950 of Planned Retail Sales for 1955 |     |
|---|-------|---|-----|
| Cotton textiles .....                               | 61    | Clothing .....  | 80  |
| Woollen textiles .....                              | 54    | All textiles .....                                    | 70  |
| Leather footwear .....                              | 55    | Footwear .....  | 80  |
| Artificial fibres (capacity) .....                  | 470   | Hosiery .....   | 100 |
| Meat .....  | 92    | Knitwear .....  | 120 |
| Fish .....  | 58    | Furniture .....                                       | 200 |
| Butter .....  | 72    | Metal utensils .....                                  | 150 |
| Vegetable oil .....                                 | 77    | Bicycles .....  | 250 |
| Granulated sugar .....                              | 78    | Sewing machines .....                                 | 140 |
| Tinned goods .....                                  | 110   | Radio and television sets .....                       | 100 |
| Wines .....   | 100   | Watches and clocks .....                              | 120 |
| Beer .....  | 100   |   |     |
| Domestic refrigerators (1951-100) .....             | 1,000 |   |     |

In 1950 the Soviet people had reached a standard of living comparing favourably with that in Western Europe. The targets planned for 1955 therefore promise a rich life indeed. The production of consumer goods has reached proportions adequate for a comfortable standard of living. In 1937 Soviet *per capita* production of cottons was 16 metres per head ; today it is nearly 50% greater—although still substantially behind *pre-war* production *per capita* in Britain and Japan. In 1937 production of woollen textiles was 0.6 metres per head ; in 1952 it is roughly double. In 1937 *per capita* production of silks was less than that of wool ; in 1952 it is 50% greater. In 1937 Soviet production of leather footwear was one pair per head (1.1 pairs in Germany, 2.2 pairs in Great Britain). In 1952 Soviet production is about 1.2 pairs—a far cry from 1913, when output was one pair per head every forty years (and then leather boots were so precious that a peasant on a journey would walk barefoot with his boots over his shoulder).

The provision of communal amenities—libraries, clubs, theatres, cinemas

—is almost lavish in scale and quality. The fifth Five-Year-Plan provides for a 25% increase in cinema installations, a 30% expansion of libraries, and 15% more clubs. The standard of the free health service is high, and it is planned to increase the number of doctors by 25% over 1950 by 1955, while production of medical equipment, instruments and supplies is planned to be 250% of the 1950 level. (A British contemporary has remarked that the number of doctors is to be raised by “only” 25%; yet this figure means the addition of a number of doctors greater than the total practising in Great Britain; and people who have read the recent report by the SCR 1951 delegation\* may be pardoned if they wonder why the USSR needs any more doctors at all!)

The fifth Five-Year Plan provides also for a 70% increase in the supply of school buildings, and the introduction by 1955 of universal ten-year schooling for all children in large urban centres (that is, for a school-leaving age of seventeen in the cities), with preparations for extending this to small towns and rural areas by 1960. This is one of the most striking indications of the standard of living now reached in the USSR; no country with a low standard of living and widespread poverty has ever been able to grant itself the luxury of forgoing the labour of its youth until they are seventeen or eighteen, still less of spending large public resources on educating them.

Housing is now the outstanding problem of the Soviet Union. In the work already quoted, Stalin poses the need for a radical improvement in housing conditions as a requisite for the transition from socialism to communism. Vice-premier Malenkov has criticised “economic executives and party officials who are inclined to regard the housing needs of the working people as a secondary matter, and who take no steps to carry out plans for the construction and repair of dwellings”.† “The task”, says Malenkov, “is to expand construction to the utmost.”‡ He reported that in the last two years a million flats (each of two large rooms, kitchen and bathroom) have been built in the cities, and 600,000 houses in the country. The fifth Plan provides for a 45% increase, compared with the fourth Plan, in State urban housing construction, and for a doubling of capital investment. In Moscow it is planned to build 100 million square feet of living space (approximately 250,000 flats, with two rooms, kitchen and bath) in the decade 1950-60: this equals the total amount of housing built in the city in the thirty-two years since 1920. Just over 40% of these flats are to be built by 1955, and the remainder from 1956 to 1960.

The provision of good urban housing depends upon supplies of steel, cement, bricks, tiles, and so on, commodities which require ample supplies of coal and power for their production. With a *per capita* production of coal and steel now greater than that of pre-war France, houses are being built in the USSR on a scale three to four times as great as before the war. The *annual* construction of urban housing in the last few years has been as great as the *total* built in the second Five-Year Plan. In cities in the districts devastated during the war, and in the Urals, building has been going on at a much faster rate than in Moscow. In the course of a critical speech at the 19th Congress, Delegate Prass reported that the urban housing in the Molotov Region had been doubled since the war; the delegate from Stalingrad reported the construction of the equivalent of 30,000 flats.

There is much more with a bearing on living standards to study in the fifth Five-Year Plan. The effect, in making work lighter, of the plans to

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\* BRITISH DOCTORS IN RUSSIA. By H. J. Joules, I. Gilliland and Mary Barber. (H. K. Lewis, for SCR Medical Committee, 1/-.)

† REPORT TO THE NINETEENTH CONGRESS ON THE WORK OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE. By G. Malenkov. (FLPH, 6d.) P. 94.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 94.

mechanise and automatise industrial processes should not be neglected. The important condition of the transition to communism, the reduction of the working day to six hours and subsequently to five, has become for the Soviet people—like the doubling of real wages and a radical improvement in housing—a practicable aim for a not too distant future, given the maintenance of peace.

The fifth Five-Year Plan takes substantial steps to raise real wages, improve housing, and introduce universal polytechnical education. The amount of machinery that must be put into use in the next three years to achieve the plan for productivity of labour, and the planned expansion of the engineering industry, will prepare the ground for a reduction of the working day “in order that members of society may have the necessary free time to receive an all-round education”,\* as a preliminary to the conversion of work “from a nuisance into ‘life’s prime want’”,† when “labour will become a pleasure instead of a burden”.‡

It is safe to say that, given conditions of peace during the next three years, visitors to the Soviet Union in November 1955 will be impressed even more profoundly and widely than were those of 1950-52.

**Campbell Creighton**

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\* Stalin. † Marx. ‡ Engels.

## **CULTURAL AMENITIES**

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WHEN I was recently in Moscow I had a number of talks with one of the Heads of Departments of the Lenin Library. A woman of fifty-five, she had just completed her work for the highest degree in librarianship and had started the preparation of a doctoral thesis: this was her personal five-year-plan.

I have started at the other end of the scale from the statistical figures giving the overall increases in cultural activity laid down in the fifth Five-Year Plan, because it is important for us to see them in terms of the human beings concerned. If we interpret cultural activities in the widest sense, to include all forms of education, the general economic expansion envisaged in the fifth Five-Year Plan will be seen to call for increased cultural activity both as a means and as an end. The Plan requires for its fulfilment a great increase not only in highly qualified scientists and technicians, but also in the general educational level of all workers, and this general raising of the cultural level means that the people as a whole are better equipped for the enjoyment of the fruits of increased productivity. One of the basic tasks, therefore, is the expansion of universities, of technical institutes, of secondary schools, of teachers' training colleges, and so on.

To take the last of these as an example, the Plan calls for a 45% increase in enrolment at teachers' training establishments. In the RSFSR alone, more than four thousand secondary (ten-year) schools are to be opened in the period 1951-55. This is to achieve the aim of universal ten-year education in all big towns by 1955 and of universal ten-year education throughout the USSR by 1960. More than a thousand of the ten-year schools required in the RSFSR alone have already been opened for the present school year.

The vastness of the education programme can be appreciated only if we



realise that not only is there to be this expansion from seven- to ten-year education, but also there is to be a great increase in the number of seven-year schools. The population of the USSR has, according to Malenkov, grown in the last three years by nine and a half million. Admittedly, this has been partly due to a reduction in the death-rate, but the increase in the number of children requiring even seven-year education is nevertheless considerable. The population of the Soviet Union is a very young one, and the total of students, young and old, is fifty-seven million—an increase of nearly eight million over 1940. When this is seen against the background of pre-revolutionary illiteracy, and the destruction of schools and interruption of school-building during the war, it will be realised that what has already been achieved is on a heroic scale.

We must, also, bear in mind that there are parts of the Soviet Union with very special problems. The British Women's Delegation who went to Moldavia this year report that a sight that has long since disappeared from Russia and most of the other Republics is still to be seen there. Young people can be seen in the schools and clubs guiding their grandparents' hands as they learn to write. Moldavia only embarked on a Soviet education programme after the Nazi armies were driven out in 1945. At that time more than three-quarters of the three million population were illiterate. Today all people under fifty have learned to read and write. This has only been achieved by sending to Moldavia teachers from other parts of the Soviet Union, not only to teach the children, but to teach teachers.

We can see that special efforts are still required in other Republics. For example, the directives of the present Plan call for a 230% increase in the number of students entering teachers' training establishments in the Lithuanian SSR (as compared with the overall increase of 45%). On the other hand, there are advanced areas. It is the proud boast of Georgia, with a population of three and a half million, that universal ten-year education has already been achieved in Tbilisi and other large towns. Of course, such comparatively advanced areas can help the more backward ones—as they do—by supplying teachers; language is, however, an obstacle to general interchange.

The achievement of the aim of universal seven-year and partial ten-year education means that, in spite of the great school-building programme, the schools are still crowded and the classes larger than is desirable—and this is likely to continue until universal ten-year education is achieved. Many schools still work in two shifts. My own impression was that they worked extremely efficiently none the less. The children study hard and are very serious-minded. They are extraordinarily well behaved, because from the earliest age they are given a sense of purpose and are intent on using their time and opportunities to the full. Their recreations and other cultural activities are mainly catered for in clubs, pioneer palaces, and so on, and the hours spent at school are, therefore, largely occupied in class work. The whole system of education both in and out of school is calculated to reduce the disadvantages of large classes and crowded schools to a minimum. The education authorities freely concede that smaller classes are desirable, but it is a matter of putting first things first. The most important thing is that the ten-year education shall be available to all as soon as possible. Improvement in the facilities can go along with this, but cannot take precedence over it.

The children have every opportunity for developing their talents and interests. They can learn any musical instrument out of school hours, they can study art with the best teachers and the best materials, they can learn carpentry, model engineering, and almost any other technical subject. They have access to an enormous variety of libraries.

In this connection I should like to say a word about one school library—at the 135th Moscow Boys' School. This was a crowded ten-year school of

1,300 pupils, working in two shifts with large classes (some of thirty-five pupils). But one large room was set aside as the school library. In addition to many journals and magazines, it had 11,000 volumes—that is, about eighty-five books per pupil—with an annual book grant of 6,000 roubles. The books were not text-books, but recreational as well as educational. A hundred and twenty a day were borrowed. The staff of the school library was two full-time qualified librarians. The senior of these was a retired head teacher, who had taken a special course in school librarianship.

The development of the library services of the Soviet Union receives special mention in the directives for the Plan. Malenkov reported that there are at present 368,000 libraries of various types. These include the great state libraries, such as the Lenin Library with its fourteen million items, the University libraries, the municipal and rural libraries, the children's libraries, the school libraries, the great scientific libraries, and, by no means least, the Trade Union libraries\* in clubs and factories. The Plan calls for an increase of 30% in the public libraries. But, of course, the increase is not merely in the number of libraries, but in the size of the existing libraries.

Let us see what this means in one case. The Tbilisi State University Library at present has a book-stock of 1,100,000 volumes, and seats 450 readers in the main reading rooms, with an additional 1,500 places for readers in the seventy-five faculty and seminar libraries. The student body this year is 5,200 and the teaching staff 560. A 35% increase is envisaged during the period of the Plan. This will mean at least 6,500 students in 1955, with a corresponding increase not only in the academic staff and in the staff of the library—already 200 in number—but also in the size of the library. To meet the growing needs of readers it is planned to have, in place of the present 400 seats in the general library, a general reading room of 100 seats for each of the twelve faculties of the University. Nor is the accommodation likely to be excessive, since libraries of whatever size always seem to be crowded in the Soviet Union.

I cannot deal at any length with University education. Great emphasis is placed, of course, on the development of scientific work, both undergraduate and post-graduate, but the humanities are by no means neglected. I need only mention that among the twelve faculties at Tbilisi University are those of Philosophy, Law, Philology (including the Georgian and Russian Language and Literature Departments), West European Languages and Literatures (English, French and German), and Eastern Languages and Literatures. Russian and one of the Western languages are compulsory subjects for all students. The Faculty of Eastern Languages and Literatures includes Departments of Hebrew, Arabic, Ancient Persian and Sanskrit.

The University has an undergraduate Society of Young Writers which publishes a journal and books, and—although music is not taught there but in a separate Conservatoire—a Students' Symphony Orchestra of seventy-five, a Choir of 150, and a Song and Dance Ensemble of fifty. Many members of these are students in the scientific faculties.

This brings me to a brief consideration of cultural activities as one of the purposes for which production is being developed. But we must be clear that there is in the Soviet view no conflict between science and technology on the one hand and art and the humanities on the other, or between cultural activity as a *means* to higher productivity and as the *end* of higher productivity.† Each interacts on the other. The worker is not just a better man, but also a better

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\* See *How We Work With Our Readers*: ANGLO-SOVIET JOURNAL, Vol. xiii, No. 1 (Spring 1952).

† See *Economic Problems of Socialism*. By J. V. Stalin. (FLPH, 6d.)

worker, for having practical all-round knowledge of both science and art ; and the artist is a better artist for having a practical knowledge of science, technology and the life of the worker.

One evening in Moscow I visited the club of the Stalin Auto Works—one of the largest factories in the suburbs. There could be seen young workers—men and women—attending the ballet class conducted by a well-known professional dancer ; others having an audition for the choir ; others learning to paint, and so on. This is not in theory so different from our own amateur clubs and societies ; but in practice the scale on which it is done, the thoroughness of the training and the standard achieved make it seem very different.

I went the following evening to a party given in honour of the young workers who had just completed their apprenticeship. A concert was put on which was impressive in its quality. The standard of acting, of dramatic reading, of dancing and of choral singing was extremely high. Indeed, I learned that it is not uncommon for such performers to make up or join groups which will undertake a professional tour, lasting, say, a year, and then return to their previous occupation. The barrier between professional and amateur is being broken down—and being broken down with the aid of the professional artists who train the amateurs.

Again, in Tbilisi we were entertained to a dinner to which were also invited a number of performers. These consisted of three of the leading operatic singers of Georgia and a group of singers and dancers from the Tbilisi Training Depot. There was no sense of incongruity in the standard of performance. The professional dares to encourage the amateur in this way, because there is no fear of lack of engagements. The Deputy Director of the Moscow Conservatoire informed me that of the 1,000 students at present training there, each would certainly receive on the average three or four offers of permanent appointments before his five-year training was completed.

The creative artist, writer, dramatist, composer or painter is in an equally fortunate position in the material sphere. He is, indeed, one of the most favoured members of the community. It is partly for this reason that writers and artists have come in for a good deal of heavy criticism in the discussion on the fifth Five-Year Plan. Criticism is, no doubt, justified, but it should not be assumed that it implies that creative activity is lacking. Statistical data in such matters can hardly mean much, and the criticism is based not on lack of quantity (sometimes the reverse), but on the fact that contemporary Soviet art does not always excite the enthusiasm of the people sufficiently.

I cannot even touch on the theoretical, aesthetic and ideological argument that the discussion of the arts in the Soviet Union arouses. I can only say that it is not accepted that the Soviet artist should be “ahead of his time” and “above the level of ordinary people”. It is bluntly stated that if Shakespeare could appeal to his contemporaries, if Verdi could arouse the passionate interest of the people, if Dickens could make the doings of his characters matters for household discussion, then the Soviet artist must strive to do the same by making his art a vehicle for the expression of the people’s life and aspirations. How he is to do this fully still remains to be seen—indeed the problem must remain a fresh one for each generation. But I have the strong impression that at present the more sophisticated artists of Russia are turning an eager eye on the new Republics—on the painting of, say, Moldavia, which has the directness of children’s art coupled with the strength of the adult ; or on the folk music of, say, Georgia, which is still a living force even among the industrial workers. From such sources the Soviet artist seeks to find a new and vital art in touch with the whole people.

Malenkov said in his report : “The fact that the ideological and cultural

level of the Soviet man has risen immeasurably must be taken into account ; his tastes are being cultivated . . . through the best works of literature and art." This seems to me demonstrably true. There is a tremendous pride in, and love of, the cultural inheritance not only of the Russian nation, not only of the Soviet nations, but of all the nations of the world. And the further development of a people's culture is seen as one of the basic tasks of the fifth Five-Year Plan.

**D. T. Richnell**

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## **" TYPICALNESS "**

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SOVIET fiction, drama and cinema have still failed to employ such an art form as satire. It would be wrong to think that our Soviet reality does not provide material for satire. We need Soviet Gogols and Shchedrins, who, with the fire of their satire, would eradicate all that is undesirable, decayed and moribund, everything that hinders our forward movement.

Our Soviet literature and art must boldly portray the contradictions and conflicts in life ; they must learn to use the weapon of criticism as an effective means of education.

In creating artistic images, our artists and writers must always bear in mind that the typical is not only what is most often met with. Typical is that which most fully and vividly expresses the essence of the given social force. In the Marxist-Leninist conception of the term, typical does not mean the statistical average. Typicalness corresponds to the essence of the given social-historical phenomenon and is not simply what is most widespread, often met with, the ordinary. A deliberately magnified image, brought out in salient relief, does not exclude typicalness, it reveals the typical more fully and emphasises it.

**G. MALENKOV**

*October 5, 1952.*

***See " It isn't true to life "***

*Page 21*

# “It isn't true to life”

B. Rurikov

SOON after the publication of A. Koptyaeva's novel *Ivan Ivanovich*\*, a review of the book appeared in *Young Bolshevik* (1950, 2). The author of the novel was particularly taken to task for the character of Olga. The critic summed Olga up as a shallow woman leading an idle, useless existence, drifting from one occupation into another, and exclaimed: “Never will our readers believe that such people as Olga are to be found in the Soviet collective!”

Shortly after reading this review in *Young Bolshevik*, our young readers had the opportunity of reading in *Komsomolskaya Pravda* a clever article by S. Narinyan entitled *Blossom Without Pride*, the “heroine” of which gave up going to school, started attending courses in polygraphy, then changed over to the legal faculty, but, being more interested in dancing than in jurisprudence, gave up these studies and changed over to book-keeping, and then began to train for a kindergarten teacher. Incidentally, by sheer coincidence, this girl, leading an idle, useless existence, was called—Olga. (*Komsomolskaya Pravda*, June 11, 1950).

Whom are we to believe? The author of the *Young Bolshevik* review asserts that such people as Olga do not exist in the Soviet collective, while *Komsomolskaya Pravda* tells the story of another Olga, a story taken not from a novel but from life!

This is not an isolated case. Almost all our journals and newspapers from time to time publish articles which come down heavily on writers who tell of negative qualities in their characters, piously protesting: “Wherever could the author have seen such a thing? It isn't true to life.” These articles may contain accurate judgments and apt observations also, but their value is greatly lessened by such pious protestations.

It sometimes happens that when an author creates a complex character, the critic is reduced to a state of bewilderment. Sometimes, just because they are bewildered, reviewers make over-emphatic and categorical assertions; this was so, for instance, with the critic M. Shkerin, who reviewed Vera Panova's novel *Kruzhilika* (*The Factory*†) in the pages of *Oktyabr*. Having encountered in the novel the character of the trade union official Uzdechkin, who possesses a number of disagreeable qualities, the critic arrived at the following sweeping conclusions:

“The character of Uzdechkin, *personifying the labour community of the factory*, is a repellent one. . . . What conclusions does the author mean us to draw? Does she mean to show Uzdechkin as a nonentity, occupying the post of chairman of the trade-union committee in a large factory as the result of a misunderstanding, so as to accentuate the outstanding gifts of Listopad (another character in the novel), or does she mean to show *the uselessness of trade unions in general*?” [My italics.—B.R.]

This is not so much a question as a cross-examination under duress. All the critic's remarks to the effect that Uzdechkin's character is not typical are based on a schematic‡ concept of life and people. In real life things are more

\* An English translation of part of this novel appeared in *SOVIET LITERATURE*, 1951, No. 1.

† Available in an English edition, *Putnam*, 9/6.

‡ Crude, over-simplified, black-and-white, formula ridden, cliché-ridden, conventional, hackneyed.



complex ; people like Uzdechkin do exist, and his personal shortcomings do not entitle us to conclude that the novelist has a subversive attitude towards trade unions. Moreover, it is a mistake to apply the individual defects of a character in a novel to the whole "labour community of a factory" or to the Soviet collective as a whole, as the reviewer has done !

Here is a selection of similar instances: S. Smirnov, reviewing L. Karelin's story *Junior Counsel* in *Novy Mir*, asks :

"How could Lukin, a front-rank worker brought up in a healthy labour collective, have come so easily under the amoral influence of Glushayev? The entire Soviet collective, a large number of Party members, and Soviet workers, the community as a whole, are represented as short-sighted, blind and deaf in the face of a single swindler and scoundrel, though in real life this could never have happened and Glushayev would long since have been banished from Soviet society."

(Let us remark in parentheses that *Pravda* recently published an account of a certain scoundrel who swindled a dozen responsible workers and continued to live in clover, not in the least worried by the fact that, in the opinion of certain critics, such incidents "just don't happen".)

Speaking in the name of reality, and posing as experts in the ways of the world, some of our critics are at great pains to prove that the portrayal of negative characters is untrue to life.

In his article on *Real and Imaginary Conflicts*, published in *Zvezda*, Y. Konstantinov protests against the representation of directors and engineers as slaves of routine, and states :

"Such a representation in literature of our captains of industry has of course *nothing to do with reality*."

In one of the stories by the writer G. Guk, a ship's mechanic was afflicted with so serious a remnant of the past as superstition : he believed in signs and portents. On this subject Y. Konstantinov remarks :

"By endowing Simchenko with a trait which is absolutely untypical of Soviet man, the author has sinned against the true facts of life."

A critical review by L. Batt of *New Uzbek Prose Writings (Oktyabr)* states :

"Rikhsibay longs for the good of the collective farm, but he is behind the times, he acts according to old ideas, he fears and resists everything new. Up to a certain point this is perfectly possible and true to life, but when everyone all around is already convinced of the usefulness of the new methods of cotton-growing, when the concrete results of the new system are already visible, the old man still persists in his attitude. Why?"

In K. Kostsytsky's book *Front Line Territory*, the attention of the critic N. Tolchenova (*Novy Mir*) was attracted by the following paragraph : "Yes, this was an offensive ! An offensive which could be won only by people with an iron conviction of the rightness of their cause. An offensive in which there was no room for moaners and waverers." The critic writes in *Novy Mir* :

"I ask you, how could there be, in our time, any moaners or waverers in a progressive factory?"

One of the critics of Babayevsky's novel *Cavalier of the Gold Star* was greatly perturbed by the fact that things did not go altogether smoothly between Irina and Sergey. In an article in *Zvezda* entitled "Notes on S. Babayevsky's Artistic Skill," the critic V. Vassiliev wrote :

"In *Cavalier of the Gold Star* there is insufficient motivation for the temporary cooling-off in the relations between Sergey Tutarinov and Irina just before their marriage. The reason for this cooling-off, and for an actual quarrel between the lovers, lay of course in the gossip someone started that Irina, a humble worker on a collective poultry-farm, was not a fit match for Sergey, a Hero of the Soviet Union. Yet the whole structure of the inner life of Soviet people like Sergey and Irina runs counter to their attaching any importance whatsoever to petty-bourgeois gossip and tittle-tattle."

In G. Medynsky's novel *Marya*, the idealistic and purposeful inhabitants of the collective village, headed by the secretary of the regional committee of the Communist Party, are contrasted with the intellectually limited, spineless Ivolgin, an official of the local Soviet. I. Aramilev, writing in *Izvestia*, reproaches the author in the following terms :

"Why did G. Medynsky find it necessary to lay on the sober colours so thick in portraying *representatives of basic Soviet organisations*? He was wrong to do so, and, above all, what he says is untrue. It isn't true to life!"

(Let us observe in parentheses once again that every character in every novel has some kind of occupation ; he works on a collective farm or in a factory, at a motor depot or in a school ; so that it is a physical impossibility to write about anyone without bringing in some post or profession. We must naturally suppose that on collective farms, as on building-sites or in schools, there may be bad people as well as good ; and the faults of a literary character cannot be regarded as a slanderous attack on a whole profession.)

Thus, we learn that the following are not true to life :

1. Chairmen of Works Committees with unpleasant personalities.
2. Women leading an idle and useless existence.
3. People who trust rotters and swindlers.
4. Managerial staff who do not support innovations.
5. Workers in progressive factories who do not keep pace with their fellows.
6. Old collective farmers who persistently refuse to accept new methods of cotton-growing.
7. Mechanics who believe in signs and portents.
8. Young men who pay attention to tittle-tattle.
9. Spineless officials in local Soviets.

And so on and so forth : our list could be prolonged indefinitely.

Belinsky once wrote ironically, on the popular concept of the "hero" : "If he is the hero of a novel, he must be truly handsome, play the guitar like an enchanter, and sing beautifully ; and he must be as strong as a lion, too."

If you show such a hero to some critics they will be well content. Instead of literary works filled with the breath of life, reflecting its complexity, its many-sidedness, and its contradictions, our writers are being urged to produce edifying tales with model picture-book heroes. Such glib advice by the critics encourages our writers to create personalities out of a world of convention, a world in which there are no difficulties or disagreements, no left-overs from the past, no backward people. Needless to say, the dream-heroes of this dream-world have no one and nothing to fight against. But life without conflict, without struggle, without passion, is devoid of movement, like a sea without wind. And again we are reminded of Belinsky, who made fun of books that prettify life : "A nice smooth style, every subject so delicate and elevated, a pleasure to read and no cause for offence."

The particular harm of such tendencies lies in the fact that the smug desire of the critics to deny life's complexity, their lack of courage in facing

the struggle between old and new, are served up virtually as manifestations of high ideological integrity, party-mindedness, and a profound knowledge of life. In reality, however, such a view of life is *alien to the Party and its ideas*; nor does it bear any trace of any *knowledge or understanding of life*.

In his famous article, *How to Organise Emulation*,\* Lenin wrote, of the period of transition from the old world to the new socialist structure: "Of course this greatest change in the history of mankind, from work under compulsion to work for oneself, cannot take place without friction, difficulties, conflicts, without applying force to confirmed idlers and their hangers-on."

In another article Lenin mocked the utopians who believed that they would "first bring up a generation of nice, clean, perfectly trained people, and then build socialism out of this material. We have always laughed at such ideas and said that this was playing with dolls—high-born maidens playing at socialism, not serious politics. . . . We want to build socialism immediately, out of the material left us overnight by capitalism, at once, and not out of a generation raised in incubators, if indeed this infantile notion is worth mentioning."

Stalin once wrote to Gorky of the importance of "accepting the wholesale tearing down of things old and feverish construction of things new as a picture of what *must be* and is therefore *desirable*, a picture, be it said, bearing little resemblance to the heavenly idyll of 'universal welfare' which is supposed to give men a chance to 'rest', to 'enjoy their bliss'."

Stalin has in a number of articles, and in particular in the fine "Dymovka" speech,† given his support to those writers who have "shown enough courage to cut off a slice of real life and hold it up for the whole country to see . . ." We should tell the comrades that it is wrong to be afraid to cut off slices of life and expose them in the light of day, however unpleasant they may be."

We can only gain by speaking directly and openly of our weaknesses and difficulties. It is a falsification and an untruth to claim that we no longer have any backward people, people with alien minds, wicked and ill-intentioned people. We have not yet got rid of the whole evil inheritance of the past, nor eradicated the last remnants of capitalism in the minds of men. Our society still holds selfish folk who think only of themselves, and bureaucrats who forget that they are merely the servants of the people. We still have among us people whose behaviour in private life and at work is unworthy of the collective, of their comrades and their families.

At the eighteenth Party Congress,‡ Molotov, after speaking of the tremendous development of the Soviet people—workers, peasants and intelligentsia—said in his report: "Among our workers, as elsewhere, there are those who lead and those who fall behind, not to mention the out-and-out misfits. The same is true of the peasants: some are progressive, some backward. And, of course, there are some who are worse than just backward . . . Here too there is need for serious measures regarding the strengthening of discipline and in the field of education generally. Without such measures, without intensive work towards the education of all working people in the spirit of socialist ownership and the socialist State, it is impossible to transform backward people into conscious and active builders of communism."

That was said thirteen years ago. In the years that have passed since the eighteenth Congress, our country has continued to grow, and Soviet man too has grown and become more conscious, his moral qualities have gained

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\* Available in English in *Selected Works* (1951), vol. II, part 2, pp. 366-377.

† On January 26, 1925. Printed in *Works*, Russian edition, vol. VII, pp. 19-24.

‡ In 1939.

strength, his will has hardened. Yet even now the task of educating the workers, of overcoming the remnants of the bourgeois tradition in the consciousness of men, continues to be one of the most important tasks of the Party and the State.

Stalin has brought the full force and depth of scientific analysis to bear upon the recognition of the fact that the consciousness of men tends to lag behind their existence as a society. In an age of transition from one type of social structure to another, men are still influenced by outdated concepts, old ideas, old habits. The remnants of the past are kept alive by our country's encirclement by capitalism, which tries to poison the consciousness of Soviet people with its disruptive influence. The struggle to root out the remnants of capitalism from the minds of men, to educate the workers, is an essential condition of the transition from socialism to communism.

It is easy to see that a smug attitude has penetrated into our literature as well as into other aspects of our life. The writers who fail to see (or pretend not to see) that the influence of the past is a very real thing, who fail to portray the real conflicts of life, who represent life as a rosy idyll, are twisting the stern reality of our epoch, an epoch of hardship, but also of heroism and glory.

Certain critics have tried to turn their fear of showing up the remnants of the past into virtually an aesthetic principle. In particular, a great muddle has recently been created around the concept of what is or is not typical. Our critics have adopted the term "untypical" as a kind of private slogan, which they are flinging about freely, distracting the writers' attention from negative facts.

Thus, N. Zhdanov, in an article on S. Mikhalkov's fables, writes on the fable *Ivan Ivanovich's Illness* :

"The bureaucrat, the official who has lost contact with the people and has acquired too high an opinion of himself, is not after all such a very common occurrence in our life. What is typical here is not so much the character itself as the method of healing, as it were, the fate that in our country befalls the man who fails to live up to the requirements of Soviet social morals . . ." (*Izvestia*, February 16, 1952.)

It is perfectly true that *the bureaucratic attitude is not typical of the progressive citizens of our country*, but to draw the conclusion that the figure of the bureaucrat as such lacks characteristic content is to deny the existence and the substance of certain negative features of real life.

A similar false thought is expressed by the Ukrainian critic K. Basenko, writing in *Soviet, Ukraine* :

"The Soviet writer of fables, in writing of the defects encountered in our society, should write in such a way that the reader realises that these facts are not typical of us, that they have no right to existence in Soviet society."

Thus the struggle against shortcomings is represented as a fight against insignificant trifles. This seems a dangerous kind of argument.

Art demands the typifying of the facts it reflects. When the Party press stated that we need new Gogols and Shchedrins, this meant more particularly that it is the duty of the writer to create striking satirical types, satirical characters that will be weapons as powerful against the remnants of the past in our life as were the types created by Gogol and Shchedrin against all that was unenlightened and reactionary in the life of their times. Books by Soviet authors may and should contain the images of the typical bureaucrat, the typical idler, the typical toady, for behind such types there stands the real thing, which is encountered in our life and which is hindering the Soviet people in the building of communism and is harming the interests of our

society and our State. We want such types to become *household words*, like Gogol's Manilov and Khlestakov or Chekhov's Sergeant Prishibeyev, names with which Soviet people can brand those who still cling to the phantom of the past.

But can we create such types if we convince ourselves that all negative characters or features are untypical? Does not such a hypocritical and sanctimonious approach destroy the ability and the need to typify the remnants of the past in artistic form? The typical is based on real facts existing in life, it is a generalisation of those facts. The artist must see and show the guiding principles of our life. Soviet literature must show the heroes of our society, look ahead to our "tomorrow", being planned and prepared by the conscious labour of Soviet people today. But the typical images created must represent different facets of our life. The representation of reality in all its fullness and truth is the first task of art, and typifying—the creation of characteristic types—must serve the purpose of a complete and many-sided portrayal of life.

The struggle between old and new is a law of social development. And, if we are speaking of what is typical—what is typical is for the *new* to exist not in a pure form, not as a laboratory formula, but in progress and movement, in the struggle against the *old*. Unless there is representation of this struggle and of the forces engaged in it, there can be neither typical characters nor typical situations. Unless we represent this struggle we cannot understand the beauty or the all-conquering power of the new. This is why we cannot convey the truth of life unless we destroy the false theory that nothing negative should be typified in the form of artistic images.

Mayakovsky, in *The Bath-House*, created the image of the self-satisfied pettifogging bureaucrat Pobedonosikov, who exhorts the artists as follows: "You are there to caress the ear, not to disturb; your job is to caress the eye, not to disturb." To "caress the eye" or "caress the ear" means demobilising art and depriving it of its function as a transformer of society.

All this talk of negative facts being untypical is sometimes used as an easy escape from truths that will not fit into any tidy and well-ordered scheme, from life itself, complex and strenuous, with its difficulties and its conflicts, the overcoming of which is the essence of progress.

Negative facts are inescapable: the negative facts described in a work of art should be conquered by the victorious forces of the new, as does indeed happen in real life. We know that among our writers there are some lovers of naturalistic grubbing-about among the pettinesses of life. Their works cannot be of use in the struggle of the new against the old because they contain no valid point of view, no understanding of the essence of progress, no attempt to steer a course. Need it be said that such uninspired picking at details has nothing to do with the true desire for realism and truth?

A recent letter from a group of *Pravda* readers has convincingly exposed the harmful quality of M. Zorin's smug and cliché-ridden review of V. Latsis's novel *Towards A New Shore* in *Literaturnaya Gazeta*. This review described the elemental processes of life, the shifting of large groups from the old to a new life, as "untypical". The intervention of the Party press has shown how harmful and how mistaken it is to try to substitute a crude formula for real life with all its complexity, its many-sidedness, its contradictions.

The hypocritical, untruthful type of criticism which when confronted with any negative fact exclaims "It isn't true to life" leads to an *impoverishment of literature*, to the emasculation of its fighting spirit, to the creation of conventional, starry-eyed works far removed from reality, showing only the shop-window aspect of life. Yet literature ought to be a chemical concentrate of life, its true reflection; otherwise it can neither educate, nor teach, nor enrich the reader's concept of life, his moral and aesthetic standards.



However hard some critics have tried to prescribe their own rules for literature, literature refuses to listen to them and forges ahead on its own course. Single stories and plays here and there could be mentioned that are put together in accordance with the glib advice of people who fear life: but all that is significant, vivid and bold is created in spite of the dogmatists and the scholasticists, on the basis of *truth and life*. We know of more than a few cases of a writer exploring some fresh vein being pilloried by the lovers of cramping formulae; it has been so with M. Sholokhov, with A. Tvardovsky, with G. Nikolaeva; but the Party and the Soviet public have always given and continue to give their support to truth-inspired creative activity.

We believe many errors to be due also to a narrow, crude understanding of the way the idea of a work of art is made manifest. Ideas are made manifest not in direct declarations on the part of the author or of some leading character. They are not superimposed on the artistic fabric, but are woven into it and developed in the course of mutual interaction, of the evolution of the various characters, of the movement of the plot, of the logical building-up of the personalities. The idea is a conclusion, an all-pervading motif, not an abstract argument pasted on to the canvas. A formula-ridden, one-sided comprehension of literary works prevents a full appreciation of such works.

The rules of the Union of Soviet Writers state that socialist realism is the *basic creative method of our literature and criticism*. Unfortunately, what has happened is that many of our critics, while talking frequently and at length of socialist realism, are in point of fact prone to forget so fundamental a principle of socialist realism as fidelity to real life. These errors require serious reflection so that they shall not occur again. There is a stern reminder to us today in Mayakovsky's words:

the Commune  
is a place  
from which officials will disappear  
and where  
there will be many  
songs and poems.

Today of all times, when we are setting foot on the approaches to communism, it is fitting to recall how ill it suits the Soviet critic to appear in the role of the old-régime official, withered and afraid of life. For it is the duty of criticism to fight for the truth of life, for all-embracing and full-blooded artistic creation, instead of clinging timorously to cramping formulae.

*Slightly abridged from LITERATURNAYA GAZETA,*

*September 11, 1952.*

*Translated by A. BOSTOCK.*

*Author's italics throughout.*

**NOTE:** B. Rurikov, the author of the above article, is Deputy Chief Editor of "Literaturnaya Gazeta" (The Literary Gazette), the official organ of the Union of Soviet Writers.

# **SIBERIAN JOURNEY**

*Miles Malleson*

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QUITE recently, flying home from Peking, the weather—fortunately for us as it turned out—became unfavourable; and we found ourselves spending unexpected days in several Siberian towns. Having been asked to write something about this for the *ANGLO-SOVIET JOURNAL*, I have decided to use a rough diary that I kept at the time. It was written only for myself and my family, and I never thought of seeing it in print, nor have I written it up for the occasion. It begins in Peking in the early hours of the morning of October 3. Here it is.



*Peking, October 3.* Up at 4 a.m. Gathered in the hall of our hotel. Handshakes and smiles with the white-coated Chinese who had looked after our every wish. Into the usual fleet of cars and a drive through a wakening Peking—there were young people still dancing in their vast, lovely red square dominated by an old Chinese building painted in reds and golds. [October 1 is their Liberation Day. There had been a great march past and in the evening fireworks and dancing all night.] At the airport, although it was five in the morning, our Chinese hosts from the Institute of Foreign Affairs were there to wish us goodbye and godspeed. More handshakes and smiles, and some words of thanks and friendliness to those of them who spoke English; goodbye to our interpreters—the girls and men who had been by our sides for a month; we had grown really fond of each other—and just before we boarded the plane more schoolgirls with more flowers, and we were away—up into a clear blue sky on a perfect summer morning. Airborne for home after about as full and wonderful a six weeks as any man could wish to have. A few hours' flight and we came down to fuel in a field in Outer Mongolia. I missed its name. There was nothing there but a few huts and the men to do the refuelling. Another few hours and down again at Ulan Bator, the capital of Outer Mongolia. But the town was round a corner of a mountain and the field had only a few more buildings than the other one. We got out of the plane. The sky was still clear blue and it was like a very hot summer day—and we had been warned to put on our warmest things.



NEXT stop Irkutsk in Siberia. We arrived there at 4 p.m.; getting colder. We were told rather ominously that there was bad weather ahead. We stopped at the airport, to leave at four o'clock the next morning. The town was too far off to see, but I went for a walk; lots of rebuilding, solid good-looking flats. It was all very like one imagined Siberia. The people were very peasant-like, great boots, and shawls over their heads and ears. We strolled, as always, just where we would, and we always seemed more interested in the people than they in us. Slept that night four beds in a room. I just took off my boots and coat and threw a blanket over myself. We were not roused at four o'clock, but I was wide awake and got up. We were very soon told that the next airport was out of action because of the weather. Dismay. Snow was falling, unusual for this time of year, and they didn't know when we could fly on; and

home suddenly seemed very far away. But we were told we should fly on at 11 a.m., and so at eleven, rejoicing, we re-entered our plane.



THREE hours' flying to Krasnoyarsk. Again we were told we should have to stop there ; the weather was getting worse ahead. Krasnoyarsk is quite a town—about 200,000 people, I think—but there was no accommodation at the airport, so they made arrangements that we should stay at a hotel. Now, of course, we were right in Siberia and there was no fancy stuff for European visitors, but the hotel was large and comfortable and unluxurious. We were very fortunate that there was a small party of Burmese flying with us. (They had been studying land reform in China.) They spoke English and they had their own interpreter, a young Russian man who spoke English, and who was extraordinarily helpful to us. So we sought out the Burmese and asked the interpreter, who was always with them, if there was any chance of going to a theatre that night. The interpreter excused himself with the Burmese, and they, with a smiling friendliness, were very ready to lend him to us, so to speak, and he disappeared to go to the telephone. He came back to tell us that the regular theatre, the Pushkin Theatre I think it was, was booked out that night, but he could find five seats in a theatre in the new Workers' and Railwaymen's Club. Of course, we jumped at this.

We had a very good dinner in the very large restaurant of the hotel, but outside it was cold and dark and snowing, and we wondered how we should find our way to the club ; but when the time came, there was a car waiting to take us there and a very friendly Russian lady was in the driving seat. The car was too small to take all five of us, so the lady took three of us to the theatre and returned for the other two. I was one of the first three. We arrived at the theatre and were shown into a small private room to leave our coats, and then were taken into the foyer and sat down to wait while the lady went to fetch our other two. And I sat and watched the audience come in and leave their coats. The place where the coats and wraps were handed up ran the whole length of the foyer and was raised up some five or six feet so that you had to stretch up a little with your coat, and the women attendants had to lean down a little from the high counter to take them. But as this cloakroom arrangement was very long, and as there were quite a lot of attendants, although everyone left their outdoor things, there was very little waiting or queueing. I don't quite know why this scene remains so vividly in my mind, except that I stayed there watching for five or ten minutes, very curiously, everything that happened. The audience were mostly young people. The men had on dark suits and there were a lot of very bright colours among the women's clothes. There was a hum and buzz of excitement and expectancy, and they were all obviously out to enjoy themselves. Then the lady with the car returned with the two who had been left behind, and we were shown into a box.

The theatre was a large square building and held about 1,200 people. It was rather like a large Methodist hall gone hay-wire with bright colours and eastern archways, and before the curtain went up it was packed quite full. The play was a Strauss light opera, which I have never seen over here, called *The Gypsy Baron*. The scenery was adequate but quite unpretentious. I think it was a company touring these enormous distances to play in these large workers' clubs, but the acting and the singing, and especially the dancing, were very much above anything one would see on tour in England except in the number one towns. In the first interval we promenaded, rather as they do at the Comédie Française. There was a very large, ample promenade, so that the 1,200 people were not in the least overcrowded, and between the acts it

was the thing to do to parade round and round. I can see them now, the men in their dark suits and the girls in their bright colours, discussing the performance. After the second act the manager of the theatre asked us into his private office and produced five enormous ices for us, which was what they were having in the lounge of the theatre. He had not a word of English; we had not a word of Russian; and all we could do was to smile our thanks. I did a little bit of mime to him to try and tell him how much we were enjoying the performance. He looked a little puzzled. I don't know what he thought I wanted. I'm afraid I'm not very good at mime!

After the play was over the car was waiting for us outside, and again the lady did a double journey to take us back to the hotel. I asked the interpreter about her and apparently she was on the Municipal Council and the car was her own, and having heard there were some Britishers in the town, she had done this for us out of sheer friendliness and goodwill. We smiled and shook hands and expressed our thanks as best we could, but I shall never forget this incident of goodwill and kindness.

The restaurant at supper was more colourful than ever. There was a good orchestra playing modern dance music and the men and women dancing as one does at the Savoy, getting up from their tables and taking their girls on to the dance floor and returning at the end of the dance. The tables were laden with food and bottles of all sorts. We found a waiter who told us that "twenty-five years ago he had very good English because he was in Chicago", and he remembered enough to help us choose a wonderful supper. And so to bed.



WE were to be roused next morning at 4 o'clock. Again we were not roused but again I was wide awake. I soon heard footsteps up and down the corridor outside my room and various noises in the hotel, from which I gathered that people were beginning to get up. So I got up myself too and went downstairs and then went for a stroll round the hotel. Snow had fallen, there were a few people about, heavily coated and booted and scarved. It seemed to me a veritable Siberian scene. Then some of our party turned up who had been more adventurous than I. It was Sunday morning and they had seen a Byzantine-looking church and had gone to it. There they found a Greek Orthodox service going on which they said was very impressive; the priest in his robes, the fine singing, the congregation prostrating themselves in their devotions more openly than they do here at home. There were, they said, they supposed about 100 people in church, but it was very early in the morning and it was very cold.

We felt even colder when we were told that the next stop, Novo-Sibirsk, was not working; flying conditions were too bad; and being Sunday the restaurant of our hotel was closed. However, the interpreter for the Burmese, who had by now really taken us under his wing—though he had no obligation at all to do so, and he was himself a stranger to the town—told us that he had found out that there was a café open where we could get breakfast, and he had ordered a big breakfast for all of us, which was to be ready at nine o'clock. And at ten minutes to nine we were to leave for this blessed-sounding café.

We had more than an hour to wait and we sat about, chatting and smoking and telling each other of the theatre the night before and of the church service and the various other things we had seen. At ten minutes to nine the interpreter made his appearance and we all jumped up. Breakfast? No! The plane was going to fly immediately. Novo-Sibirsk was clear of fog, but we had to start at once. So, cold and hungry, but glad to be moving on,

we took off again for a three-hour flight to Novo-Sibirsk. We were only there an hour and took off again for Omsk. By the way, Novo-Sibirsk was where I and two others of the party had spent a night when we were on the way out and where we had seen an immense building programme of large new flats and factories. Indeed, one of my companions calculated that when finished the main street there would be three or four miles long, which sounded a lot to me and an exaggeration, but when I remembered the miles of buildings we passed from the airport to the centre of the town, maybe he was not so far out.

In another two or three hours we landed at Omsk, where Lenin was in exile. We thought we were really getting on, but again the next airport was out of commission, so a night at Omsk; this time in a dormitory with about sixteen people, and again I didn't take my clothes off, and again we were to be roused at 4 a.m., and again we weren't, but I was awake. And in the dark, without disturbing the other fifteen sleepers, I put on my boots and went out into the lighted corridor; I could see it was lighted by the crack under the door; and I walked into the large hall of the airport. What a sight! Every square inch of floor was covered by sleeping Russians. Every chair was filled with sleeping men and women. They can curl themselves up and sleep on anything, with children in their arms too. All the air lines were temporarily held up and travellers from all over Siberia seemed to be collected there. Two men were awake, playing chess, watched, as always, by a small crowd of people making comments on every move. Chess here is like darts at home. There are boards in every room where people wait, and continual games, always watched by a small crowd grunting and commenting as the game proceeds, and the two players concentrating so that apparently they are conscious of nothing else.

I joined the group for a while. Then I noticed there was a coming and going through a door, and I tried going through it myself. It was the restaurant which had kept open all night, and there was our waitress who had looked after us at dinner, still up and still waiting on dozens of people at the little tables. She might have been Masha in *The Bachelor*, not pretty, and with a rather snub, turned-up nose, but looking so young and fresh even after a night's work, and she had on a very pretty pink blouse. I sat down and asked for a glass of tea—I had learnt the Russian for tea and how to pay sixty kopeks—and sat there thinking how queer for me to find myself here and very glad of the boiling hot tea. Then two people, who seemed to me straight out of a Tolstoy novel, came in. A tall man in a fine, long black coat and a beautiful woman, with a lovely white lace thing round her head framing her face, with her black hood over it all. Although they looked to me grander than the rest of the crowd of workers nobody took the slightest notice or treated them with any greater respect. They found two places, ordered food and drink and sat there talking in undertones.

With my hot tea inside me I walked back into the hallway. Even the chess players had fallen asleep over an unfinished game. So I put on a heavy overcoat and walked out into the cold fresh air as the light began to come into the sky. By then a few of the rest of our party began to appear and we set off for news. We went and found our devoted interpreter. No flying. Rather a hopeless feeling that we might be here for days. But we weren't.



AFTER lunch they told us they were going to break the party up into two planes which could then carry more petrol, enough to fly right over the next airport and right into Kazan, which was the last stopping place before Moscow. So into the plane again; but we hadn't flown an hour before we were told we couldn't land at Kazan and were coming down at a tiny emer-



agency airfield, which we did. There was only one building there and the necessary stores of petrol, and there happened something I shall never forget.

I walked into the small room of the one building. There were the usual waiting Russians, every bench and seat crowded. Two little boys, about my grandson's age, with brown fur caps, were running about under people's legs and out into the snow and back again, playing like two little bears. Their parents kept a careful eye on them, but let them rollick about as they pleased. At the one small table was a very handsome young Russian officer with a chess board in front of him. Immediately he saw me, he signed would I like a game of chess. I nodded. He set out the pieces and immediately we were surrounded by a crowd of spectators. For the first half dozen moves or so I played the usual opening, then when the situation became a bit more complicated I made a move. The officer looked surprised, looked up at me and smiled, shook his head, replaced the pieces and showed me the move I ought to have made. Soon after a spectator grunted at one of my moves and replaced the pieces and made the right move for me. They exchanged a Russian name—I cannot write it or pronounce it, but it was the name of their present chess champion of the world.\* Obviously it was a situation or a move well known by chess players. They take their chess extraordinarily seriously and everywhere it is of a very high standard. By dint of every other move of mine being corrected the game lasted quite a while, but just before I should have been finally checkmated I was saved by a sudden stir outside. Kazan was free from fog and we could fly on. The chessmen were put away. There were smiles and handshakes all round, and I climbed into the plane.



KAZAN, I think the last airport in this direction from Moscow, was a wonderful sight. It is a huge airfield and it was crowded with all kinds of planes, and it seemed to me that the Russians are developing flying as the normal means of transport in this vast country. Planes were taking off and landing at very short intervals, and names of towns from all over Siberia were mentioned. Every type of Russian seems to be able to afford to fly. Peasants with their babies in their arms climbed into the planes beside people like the man with the black coat and his lovely companion with lace round her face. And so on to Moscow.

We flew over it at night. The lights below were fantastically beautiful. A vast city. In the airport we were told we were flying on to Prague at three in the morning—just time to be driven to a hotel for a bath and a meal. A heavenly hot bath—clothes off for the first time in three or four days, and I treated myself to my favourite Russian meal—caviare and vodka, sturgeon with a bottle of light Russian beer—and away to the airport and up into the night again for Prague and for home.

*October 1952.*

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\*Botvinnik.—Ed.

# CULTURAL DELEGATION TO THE USSR, SEPTEMBER 1952

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## I. SOVIET MUSIC TODAY. Bernard Stevens

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I HAVE just returned from my first visit to the USSR, where, for three crowded weeks, I received the full impact of Soviet life in all its richness and variety.

As a composer and teacher of composition, my greatest wish was to see how my opposite numbers lived and worked; only thus could I hope to understand in direct human terms the nature of the Soviet system. I must thank my Soviet hosts for the readiness with which they granted me the facilities for realising my wishes.

The Union of Soviet Composers invited me to spend the evening with their Committee. I met about fifteen of their number in their very comfortable and well-appointed building. Several well-known composers, including Shaporin and Kabalevsky, were present. In a delightfully informal and friendly atmosphere, we had a long discussion on many of the problems concerning composers in our two countries. Naturally, the function and character of criticism by the Party and by the composers themselves occupied much of our time. There was no evidence that criticism as such is resented or that composers suffered in any way as a result of it. Shaporin and Kabalevsky told me that in spite of the criticisms they received in 1948 they were both to have new operas produced at the Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow this season. I received a very clear impression that Soviet composers in general were far from satisfied with the work they were producing at present. This dissatisfaction was not on technical grounds but because they felt it did not succeed in giving adequate expression to the spirit and vitality of the people. Too often the optimism that pervades all activity in the USSR was reflected in music that was over-obvious or trivial, failing to reflect its variety and profundity. So far they had succeeded in expressing the past struggles of the Soviet people more fully than their present achievements. More and not less criticism and discussion was needed to try to discover the reasons for this. I mentioned that Shostakovich's cantata, *The Song of the Forest*, written to celebrate the great afforestation schemes, had disappointed many people in the West who had great hopes of Soviet music. The Soviet composers said that in the opinion of most of them this was not an outstanding work in itself but that it contained elements that were quite new in Soviet music which they hoped other composers as well as Shostakovich would succeed in developing. They said the Government was doing everything possible to help them by providing numerous opportunities for performance and excellent working conditions for composers.

During our discussion on the work of living British composers, I was pleased to note that they were well-informed about the activities of our composers. The scores of most of our leading composers and most music journals are received in the USSR. A long and laudatory article on Vaughan Williams and another on more general aspects of British music appeared recently in *Sovietskaya Musika*, the leading musical journal. Vaughan Williams is admired particularly for his strong national characteristics and for succeeding in developing a melodic style based on folk-song. Our other composers were admired for their imagination and skill, but they were disturbed by the absence of specifically British characteristics. However, I think I succeeded in convincing them that the problem of writing characteristically national music was far greater in a country such as Britain, where folk-music had lost its popularity, than in the USSR, where the folk-music tradition had never been interrupted.

I made an extensive tour of the Conservatoire in Moscow, in the company of the Assistant Director, Professor Orved, the leading authority on brass bands in the USSR. There are a thousand students, all holding scholarships and mostly resident in the Conservatoire. They are recruited from the special music-secondary schools, to which the children of talent are sent between the ages of twelve and seventeen. At these schools all general subjects are taught in addition to music. In ordinary schools

class-singing only is taught, the children's choirs, orchestras and individual tuition being provided in the Pioneer palaces, which all children may use. At the Conservatoire a five-year course is compulsory in principal subject, second subject, history of music, philosophy and one foreign language. I was told that all students are found employment on leaving and, in fact, that the demand exceeds the supply. It is probable that there will be as many as fifteen hundred students next year. I "listened in" to several lessons in progress. I was much impressed by a composition lesson by Professor Fere, during which students from several remote Asian republics, which have not yet their own conservatoires, played compositions based on their own folk-music. I saw no evidence of attempts to Russify their work.

There are twenty-five conservatoires in the various republics. During my visit to Georgia, in the south, I was shown over the Conservatoire at Tbilisi, the capital, by the director, Professor Kiladze, the leading Georgian composer. This conservatoire is about half the size of that in Moscow, but is run on similar lines. Here, however, special emphasis is given to the collection and study of Georgian folk-music by students, who go on extensive tours of the remote parts of Eastern Georgia. This folk-music is now widely performed by amateurs on all social occasions, as well as in concerts, and is of a very remarkable character indeed, frequently containing three-part polyphony even in its original form, which dates back to the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

The delegation of which I was a member was fortunate in arriving in Moscow in time for the opening of the opera and ballet season. I attended five performances at the beautiful Bolshoi Theatre, which celebrated its one hundred and seventy-fifth birthday last year. It has an enormous stage, ideally suited to the spectacular productions of the great Russian national operas of the nineteenth century, in which this theatre specialises. It is difficult to describe the breath-taking realism of these productions. At least one scene in each of the productions I saw so impressed the audience that it burst into spontaneous applause as soon as the curtain was raised. The lavishness of the costumes and the skilful and artistic use of lighting were equally impressive. The acting was on an extremely high level, again consistently realistic. Characterisation was vividly expressed and even in crowd scenes the least important characters always acted convincingly. One felt that the producer's primary objective was to refute Dr. Johnson's definition of opera as "an exotic and irrational entertainment". Glinka's *Ruslan and Ludmilla* and *Ivan Susanin* and Chaikovsky's *Queen of Spades* all responded brilliantly to this style of production. Borodin's *Prince Igor*, however, I found disappointing. The exotic romanticism was carried to such lengths that it obscured the human content of the story. Even the Polovtsian dances were overcrowded and lacking in clarity of design. The singing was very uneven in quality. The basses were always magnificent, in the great Chaliapin tradition, the contraltos generally were very good, but the sopranos and tenors were often lacking in power as well as in quality and range of tone. The chorus was rhythmically very precise and with magnificent tone. The orchestral playing was of the highest quality, particularly that of the woodwind and brass. The strings, although always sensitive and clean, were a little lacking in warmth of tone.

All the productions bore witness to intensive rehearsal; it is in fact customary for a new production to be in rehearsal for as long as a year. I missed the performances of Mozart and Verdi at the Maly Theatre, but I am told that they are just as thoroughly rehearsed as those at the Bolshoi and in the same realistic style.

I saw only one ballet, *The Fountain of Bakhchisarai*, by the Soviet composer and leading musicologist Assafiev, who died in 1948 in Leningrad from wounds received during the siege. The music of this fairy-tale ballet is very remarkable and strange, covering an enormous range of styles, from eighteenth-century pastiche, through early nineteenth-century romanticism to late-romantic chromaticism, which I, for one, found very disconcerting. I was assured, however, by the Soviet composers with whom I discussed this point, that Assafiev was consciously reflecting the varied styles employed by Pushkin in the poem on which the ballet is based. The dancing was technically very polished but seemed to me to lack the poetry that is to be found, for example, in the work of Margot Fonteyn.

The audience at the Bolshoi provided as much interest as the stage. There were no latecomers and the audience followed the action with sustained concentration. There was very great enthusiasm at the end of every performance, with the exception of

the audience, reaction was to be represented, workers, peasants. It was impossible to get to the seats occupied by the majority being advanced by factories, shops, pushing for tickets at the box office.

The season of public concerts does not begin until October to attend a concert in either of the two very fine concert halls in Moscow, the Chaikovsky Hall, which seats four thousand, and the hall of the Conservatoire, which holds two thousand. There were, however, many posters announcing concerts of orchestral and chamber music for the winter season.

Every large factory possesses its own Palace of Culture, of which that at the Stalin Auto Works in Moscow is considered to be a characteristic example. Built in 1935, its general plan is similar to the Festival Hall in London. I attended a concert there given entirely by the factory workers, not only for their fellow workers but open to all people living in the district. The programme consisted of an excellent mixed choir, wearing national costume, which performed arrangements of folk-songs and new topical songs in folk-song style. One was about two girl workers complaining to the manager that there were no young men working in their department! There were also folk-dance groups, solo singers and some excellent comedians. The general standard was extremely high, most of it of professional level. I was told that factory choirs and dance groups are frequently asked to turn professional; some do, but most prefer to remain in the factory, where they are given plenty of time to rehearse and to go on concert tours. All professional artists, including the leading ones, devote much of their time to performance in factories.

Before the concert, I visited many other rooms in the Palace of Culture, where workers were learning ballet dancing (from a dancer at the Bolshoi), receiving auditions for the choir, practising various instruments, rehearsing plays, studying painting, sculpture and various crafts. In another large hall, crowded with men and women workers, a dance was in progress, accompanied by a factory brass band playing arrangements of folk-dances. The only "Western" dance music I heard throughout my stay in the Soviet Union was performed (usually very badly!) in hotel restaurants.

The Gorky Park of Rest and Culture in Moscow contains amusements such as are to be found in Battersea Park, including a large open-air theatre, where I heard an excellent amateur folk-song-and-dance ensemble from Azerbaijan perform before a large and enthusiastic audience in the pouring rain. In another part of the park a young woman, assisted by an accordion player and microphone, was teaching an audience new popular songs. Only a few people were present at first, but gradually the crowd swelled to an enormous size in spite of the rain!

To sum up my impressions, I would say that I was left in no doubt whatever of the necessity of music for the Soviet people in helping them to co-ordinate their thoughts and feelings for the gigantic tasks of building their new and wonderful civilisation.

## 2. AN ARCHITECT'S VIEW. *John Pinckheard*

FOR an architect nurtured on the architectural theories of the "modern movement", the Soviet Union presents two inescapable and disturbingly contrasting impressions. On the one hand, there is a highly mechanised building technique; on the other, a mode of architectural expression deriving directly from national traditions and owing nothing to the theories which underlie the contemporary architecture of the West.

"Modern" architecture in the West has developed on the basis of, and claims to express, modern technique. In the Soviet Union, where building technique is more highly developed than in the West, architecture is not "modern" in our limited sense of the word; it is following quite a different road, a road which links it directly with the architecture of the past. Soviet architects have, so to speak, returned to the main path of architectural development somewhere before that parting of the ways where the pioneers of the "modern movement" first branched out on their now well-trodden road (Soviet architects would say *cul-de-sac*) and set off in a quite new direction.

Many architects who are ready with praise for Soviet building technique, in the same breath stigmatise Soviet architecture as "reactionary". Before considering this verdict it is important to understand what is meant by "reactionary". The Soviet point of view sees matters in quite a different way. A movement or a picture or a work of architecture is reactionary or progressive only in relation to its effect on people. If the picture or the building gladdens and inspires people in their struggle to build a better life for themselves and society, then in the Soviet view it is progressive. If it fails to evoke these feelings, if it fails to "educate", it cannot be progressive. One Soviet architect with whom I discussed this question said quite bluntly: "Constructivism does not educate the people—it has other aims. It helps in the exploitation of the people, and that is why it is not progressive, but is the most reactionary architecture that has ever existed in world culture." Whether one agrees with it or not, the Soviet architect's condemnation leaves no doubt about what he means by "reactionary". It would be helpful if critics of Soviet architecture were as careful in defining their terms. Clearly there is a major theoretical divergence, and whatever we feel about the merits of Soviet architecture, the existence of such a schism should at least prompt us to turn a critical eye on some of our own theoretical assumptions.

I WAS fortunate in being able to meet several well-known Soviet architects, and discuss technical and theoretical questions. It may be of interest to put on record the views expressed by Professor Savitsky in the course of a discussion I had with him and G. A. Zakharov in Moscow. In the course of his replies to my questions about Soviet architecture he said: "In the early years some architects supported the theory that a new ideology could not be expressed by old forms. This theory has much in common with the constructivism of the West, and a number of buildings were designed which were marked by one of the distinguishing features of constructivism—that is, neglect of the past. We invited great architects from foreign countries and gave them the opportunity to create modern forms; in particular we invited Le Corbusier, who designed the building in Kirov Street for the Ministry of Light Industry. But the main feature of our Soviet architecture is that it pays great attention to people and it soon became very apparent that our people did not respond to, or-like, this constructivism, these boxes stripped of the traditional styles of our country. . . . In 1932 an international competition was held for the design of the Palace of the Soviets. Famous architects, including Cyropius and Le Corbusier, participated, and it became very clear that the methods of constructivism would not help us to illuminate the features of socialism. The best of the projects were examples of constructivism. Le Corbusier, for example, submitted a project which resembled a hangar. All the projects were discussed by our Soviet people, and it became evident that our people did not understand such an 'ideal' architecture, and our architects themselves felt that by the methods of constructivism it would not be possible to illuminate the great ideas of our system. A great competition was then organised in our country. Many architectural groups participated, and several tendencies were represented. The completed designs were exhibited for discussion by the people, and it became clear that to erect a building which would embody the great ideas of socialism would be possible only when we based ourselves on our national traditions and the classical form of architecture. The big mistake we discern in criticism by representatives of the West lies in their contention that we want to rebuild the old classical forms of architecture, to use old forms and old methods and to make our buildings the same as the buildings of the past. If we do produce such a building it is subjected to severe criticism. The best designs are those which use classical forms, but at the same time create a completely new building. For example, Zakharov, when he was working on the design for the Kurskaya Metro Station, used many details taken from classical architecture, but no one could say that an old building served as a model for this station. You can easily see that a definite architectural idea was embodied in this station; it could hardly be said to bear an archaic form. The same may be said of the tall buildings of Moscow. . . . It seems to us that constructivism has no future outlook, because all the combinations that can be achieved by the use of concrete and glass and exposed structural forms have been exhausted, whereas the method used by Soviet architects is capable of great further



development. . . The use of national tradition and classical tradition is the way that gives birth to an unlimited capacity for development."

ARCHITECTURAL features, ornament and sculpture are freely used on all important buildings. One often hears the question asked by Western observers: "Why is so much lavished on buildings like the Metro when there is still a shortage of houses? Would it not be better to have a utilitarian Metro and further expand house production?" I think this question arises only because of a misunderstanding of the role of architecture. In the Soviet Union architecture is not a luxury, it is a necessary form of artistic environment, whose function is to stimulate, to sustain, and to arouse enthusiasm. It is no part of the Soviet aim to create a bleak and utilitarian environment which far from stimulating would depress; on the contrary, it is to provide all the conditions for a full life, conditions which are not satisfied by buildings whittled down to the bare structural bones. In the West buildings emerge as bare brick prisons, often as much a result of the dictates of economy as of architectural theory. Whether or not there is an underlying connection between these twin influences, there is an undeniable coincidence in the effects of economic stringency and the architectural theory of the "modern movement". In the Soviet Union, whatever the need for economy (and the most rigorous economy is practised in structural design), it is not permitted to hamper the most exuberant architectural expression.

The importance of the specifically architectural aspect of buildings, cities and civil engineering projects is widely understood. On several occasions I was asked my views, not simply about the Volga-Don Canal, but about the *architecture* of the canal, and if I digressed on to engineering matters the conversation would be politely steered back to the point under discussion. The Volga-Don Canal is a tremendous engineering project; details have been given elsewhere\* of this giant staircase of water which enables large ships to climb some 280 feet above the level of the Volga and descend 140 feet to the Don. It has been conceived not only as an engineering project but as a piece of architecture on the grand scale. It stretches out across some sixty miles of semi-desert, its white towers punctuating the bare landscape. Each of its thirteen locks is marked by four towers, a pair flanking each lock gate, and because each lock is in sight of the next-adjacent ones above and below it, the view from the water is always dominated by the massive lock towers. The whole effect is architecturally unified and boldly monumental, plainly symbolising Soviet achievement and reminding the traveller that a journey through its thirteen locks is no ordinary occasion. The predominantly classical detailing of the individual towers I found less acceptable. It was, however, instructive to hear the views of other members of our delegation. At one point immediately below a lock the canal is crossed by a steel bow-string bridge. The bridge, devoid of all "superfluous" features, its spare lines dictated only by structural economy, was all the more arresting because of its juxtaposition against the classical monumentality of the lock towers. My fellow delegates (all non-architects) had no hesitation in deciding in favour of the classical tradition.

The insistence by Soviet architects on the value of tradition in architecture leads to the greatest diversity in architectural style throughout the Soviet Union. Each nationality has its own traditions and therefore its own architecture. In Georgia it was fascinating to see an indigenous architecture quite different in character from that of Russia. Georgia has its distinctive national tradition, but one which also partakes of the cultures of some half dozen successive waves of invaders, from Romans to Turks. Today it nourishes a most vivid and colourful style, in which the heritage of Byzantium, of Persia and of the Ottoman Empire can all be traced, but on an ancient background of its own. On the eve of our delegation's departure to Georgia I talked with an architect in Moscow. He said: "When you are in Georgia you will see quite different architecture from that in Russia. Georgian architecture is near to Georgia, has its own traditions and its own history, and expresses the wishes of Georgians. We would be illogical if we created the same buildings in Georgia as in Moscow (which is what we would be doing if we adopted constructivism), because by using constructivism we neglect the interests of a people, its natural features, customs, culture and in general all its history—and we have quite another policy."

\* See: *Soviet Union*, 1952, 6, 8, 9. *News*, 1952, 16. *VOKS Bulletin*, 1952, 76. *New Times*, 1952, 31, 32. *Soviet News*, 1952, July 17. *Soviet Weekly*, 1952, June 5.

Respect for the architectural heritage of the past is manifested not only in the continuity of historical and contemporary architecture—a continuity so regular that I had great difficulty in dating individual buildings—but also in the great care with which old buildings of architectural importance are preserved. It is a familiar sight in Moscow to see the late eighteenth-century and early nineteenth-century stuccoed façades being washed down and renovated in their traditional polychrome colourwash, or churches freshly painted with glistening domes and walls of white and earthy red. The wonderful cluster of churches in the Kremlin is an exemplary piece of preservation. Especially I remember the dark glowing interior of the Cathedral of the Assumption.

THE predominant method of building construction in the cities we visited was brick load-bearing walls with concrete floors. Brick construction was to be seen on all sides in Moscow, Stalingrad and Rostov. In Tbilisi, while brick was used too, a good deal of walling was in roughly squared blocks of tufa, usually with a rendered finish, or for important buildings—like the new Soviet building—faced with thin slabs of worked tufa. The intended finish for most brick buildings is, or was, rendering, but often the external finishing lags well behind the main structural work. Rendering is recognised as an unavoidably time-consuming process, and is being steadily ousted by the use of ceramic facing-blocks. Thermal insulation, essential where winters are severe, is usually provided in the form of slag concrete applied either as an internal skin or as a core between two skins of brickwork. While most new construction is going ahead in common bricks—often “sand-limes”—much attention has been paid both to developing new types of brick and hollow ceramic blocks, and to investigating the structural theory of brickwork. In particular, bricks and blocks which combine high compressive strength and low thermal conductivity have been developed, and with them it is possible to build fourteen-storey blocks with load-bearing walls as little as 2ft. 8in. thick at the base. An eight-storey block of flats of the same type of construction has walls about thirteen inches thick at the base.

Apart from brickwork, which is highly mechanised (mechanical handling of bricks and mortar and a wide range of jigs and templates to help speed up work), building work is largely a matter of assembly. Floor-beams, floor-slats, staircases, windows, doors, roof-trusses and so on are commonly prefabricated and require only a minimum amount of work on the building site. Great importance is attached to the development of the prefabrication industry. Standard parts are manufactured in accordance with a universal system of dimensional co-ordination, in which the unit dimension or “module” is ten centimetres. Plans of all buildings embodying prefabricated components are prepared on the same dimensional “grid.” I was told by a Moscow architect that for planning purposes a module of forty centimetres is adopted as often as possible to reduce the diversity of components.

Parallel with advances in the technique of brickwork are new developments in prefabricated wall construction which are likely finally to displace brickwork altogether. Prefabricated storey-high wall-panels of several types are now in production. One type, finished externally with ceramic and internally plastered, is complete with windows, glazed and painted, and incorporates thermal insulation and electricity, telephone and radio wiring. Flats up to five storeys can be built with such panels. Erection is at the rate of one storey every six days. A completely automatic factory for the mass production of such panels is shortly to be put into operation.

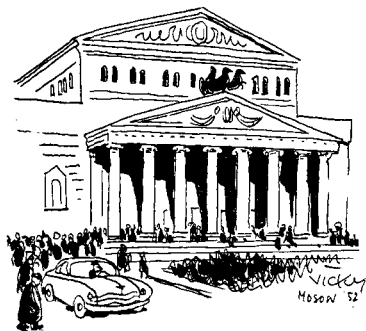
Two main factors have transformed Soviet building technique: prefabrication (of both components and complete buildings), and the high degree of mechanisation of site work. All heavy work—such as excavating and the movement of materials—is done by machines. Every site has its tower-crane (or cranes)—a familiar feature on every urban skyline—handling all heavy components and materials. With these machines, bricks and mortar are distributed to positions within reach of the bricklayers, and prefabricated panels weighing five tons are easily manoeuvred into position. Everything goes ahead at an exhilarating tempo. The industry which is so radically transforming the face of the Soviet Union is itself rapidly changing. Less than thirty years ago it was slow, inefficient, badly organised, and based on small firms working by craft methods. Today, with its fast-developing new techniques, it is an example to the world.

### 3. LIFE MORE ABUNDANTLY. Eleanor Fox

#### Illustrations by "Vicky"

We are indebted to the "News Chronicle" for permission to use "Vicky's" illustrations.

COMING into Moscow along a tree-lined highway in the early September dusk, the most breathtaking first impression we had was of the new university building, almost completed, soaring up into a clear, smoke-free early evening sky. The magic of it is not that of the fairy castle in *Ruslan and Ludmila*, which we saw a few days later in the Bolshoi Theatre. It is the magic of *man* conquering problems and difficulties and looking into the future with hope and confidence. Talking with the deputy chief engineer on the university site, we listened attentively to his figures for the building job: so many tons of this and that, so many miles of corridors; but the magic that is reality today and tomorrow was his simple phrase: "The university is the first of many buildings in this area—there'll be over a million Muscovites living here soon."



THE BOLSHOI THEATRE

Moscow's famous State Opera House, which celebrated its 175th anniversary last year.

over the great fences round building sites and the scaffolding of buildings still going up. Our hotel stood almost at the corner of the completely rebuilt main square, and we looked across at the newly finished Drama Theatre, the hurrying crowds, the shops filled with food and clothes, furniture and books, thronged with buying customers, with a sense of humility at being honoured guests in a city whose defence cost so many Soviet lives and saved Britain so many.

This sense of magic, which—in more moderate terms—is the feeling of the future in the present, was with us when we slowly flew low over the Tsimlyansk Sea, which when Boris Polevoy visited Britain and described it at a meeting in November 1951 was a dusty, empty bowl. In September 1952 we saw tugs pulling strings of barges across this new sea.

We were the second foreign delegation to travel the Volga-Don Canal up all the nine locks on the Volga side, spending one of our most memorable days here looking at the new settlements at every lock, seeing the dry steppe stretching for miles on either side, and beginning to appreciate what these vast stretches of water will do to change the climate in a short space of time.

These are general impressions which many people in the delegation shared, each in his or her own way. For me they were most striking of all. Knowing Russian well and constantly reading extensively in the Soviet press, I had thought I had some grasp of what Soviet people were like. The grasp *was* there, but how far it fell short of the reality! My grasp had been a bare handful; now it became whole armfuls of enthusiasm and appreciation.

We have often said and written that the gap between amateur and professional, reader and writer, musician and audience, books and public, is small in the Soviet Union. We had during our visit some indication of the immensity of the scale on which this may be judged, in two differing spheres of Soviet life. At the Stalin Auto Works Club in Moscow, with its 400 rooms, great hall and excellent theatre-cum-cinema, we noticed a large display cabinet outside the main library. It was crammed with booklets, pamphlets, books. They were some of the 10,000 pieces of original research, new rationalisation ideas, and so on, which the workers of this factory had written. A similar room was devoted to this subject in the *Dom Tekhniki* (House of

Technique) attached to the Red October Metallurgical Works in Stalingrad. And in Tbilisi, in Georgia, the university rector showed us with pride the second volume of short stories published by students at the university.

Books are a living everyday reality for the people; it was as exciting to see the crowds buying in bookshops and at the street kiosks with their simple slogan *Kniga V Narod* (Books to the people) as to recall the words of the director of the Tbilisi State Library, who, when complimented on his very lovely old library rooms, said: "Yes, but they're lovelier still when they're full of people." (We visited this library while it was under repair.) The truth of his words we saw for ourselves over and over again. There was the packed reading room on a Sunday night in the Gorky Park of Rest and Culture in Moscow, seating 250, which closed on this evening at 8 p.m. so that people could listen to a lecture on Repin, famous nineteenth-century Russian realist painter. There was, wherever we went, the hushed silence of the chess rooms. In this park we found chess players with crowds watching the first round of a local tournament; in the magnificent Club House in the Tbilisi Park, towering over the city in a blaze of light at night; in the Pioneer Palaces and other buildings where people gather in their leisure time; always there were chess players, and books, books, books.



MOSCOW FASHION

The sense of the future in the present, which persisted so strongly during our whole stay, could hardly be better exemplified than in the leisure activities of children. The Georgian literature section of the Pioneer Palace in Tbilisi (one of a hundred in this city, with a membership of 9,000) had 500 members. Its two modest rooms had some first-class exhibition material on the walls. "All prepared by my children," said the instructor proudly. There was some Shakespeare and Byron in Georgian, there were national and Russian writers there. "My children are so anxious to keep abreast of current Georgian writing, and read so much about Georgian culture generally," she added, "that the moment any new books, poems, plays, films appear, they're after me. 'Let's hurry up and have a discussion on it, or else there'll be reviews in the grown-up press and the grown-ups will say we got our ideas from them.'" A simple tribute, paid quite unawares, to the widely questioning minds of Soviet young people, minds that they take with them into adult life.

The "children's camp record" in the Stalin Auto Works, with its mounted butterflies, carefully labelled flowers and stones, neatly set out photographs, began a process of gradual conviction (a process completed during his stay) for one of our delegates, whose constant cry at first had been: "Yes, but where are the juvenile delinquents? There *must* be delinquents!" This "camp record" room, the record of the many summer weeks spent by hundreds of children in country camps run by the factory, this room of the children's own in the children's section of this adults' club, was evidence of a full and inventive and satisfying leisure.

That was in its own way as impressive as the crowded rooms of the children's section in the Lenin Library, which is the central specialised and reference library for the whole of the Soviet Union; it was as telling as the Tbilisi children's railway—a mile long, with three stations, a branch line, and all the usual railway appendages, signal boxes, stationmasters, and ticket collectors, entirely staffed by children aged nine to eighteen. As adults, we were honoured to travel on this model-scale railway, and we have not forgotten the pride with which one of the older boys said: "And yes, you know, our engine's awfully out of date; we're having a new one next year; and though we're the shortest children's railway in the country now, we're the very first." Four hundred children were attending courses that autumn to prepare them-

selves for running their own railway the following summer. A single teacher was general supervisor but hardly interfered.

This sense of worth, this feeling that what you do *matters*, is part of making the present into the future, the future into the present. The Gorky Park had an excellent exhibition of current work by Moscow sculptors, and the pavilion housing it was packed with ordinary people discussing the work on show. The Tretyakov Art Gallery, which houses Russian graphic art painting, and sculpture, was full of people on an ordinary weekday afternoon, the theatres were packed with ordinary people.

The standards by which ordinary Soviet people judge creative and interpretative work are often clearly those of the performer as well as the listener or spectator. At the Stalin Auto Works Club we saw a ballet class, one of several, being rehearsed by a professional male dancer from the Soviet Army Song and Dance Ensemble; and very good they were. We were hard put to it to stop the elderly man in charge of the crowded art class from giving us a full and lengthy exhibition of all the work of all his pupils, of whom he was obviously very proud. Quiet, nondescript-seeming, his white canvas shoes rather shabby and his grey suit sagging from having too many books carried in the pockets, he turned out to be the Director of the All-Union Permanent Children's Art Exhibition. We watched the drama circle rehearsing a complex scene from the classic Russian writer Ostrovsky; they were being trained by a professional actor from one of the Moscow theatres. Most impressive of all, we not only heard auditions for the factory's Russian folksong choir, but were entertained by an evening's amateur ensemble of songs, sketches and dances. We had stumbled on a "graduation" evening for factory apprentices who had finished their training, and the club was full of young people, both in the theatre auditorium and ballroom dancing in the columned hall. They were fresh-faced youngsters, frank and confident, and in their eyes and manner was a calm born of assurance of the great prospects of the future.



ULANOVA

To us she is the greatest living ballerina, yet, in Russian eyes, she has many near-equals.



MUSIC STUDENT

Like the Georgian tramway workers whose amateur song group was of a standard despaired of on occasion by professionals elsewhere, the folksong choir and the folkdancers at the Auto Works Club were outstanding. The Soviet people use their leisure not only for true relaxation, making music, song and dance: the amateur who performs and learns is known to be a stern judge of the professional of whose trade he knows something. As a result, Soviet people set high standards of individual and collective criticism. It was as impressive to see the audience at a second-rate musical comedy in Stalingrad streaming away without a single curtain call as it was to be one with the great audience at the Bolshoi holding the singers and dancers for six, seven, eight or more calls. People who appreciate classical opera and ballet evaluate amateur talent competitions and themselves widely participate in a great variety of amateur activities and, with a full leisure, a calm confidence in their future which permeated everything we saw them doing, work and build and strive, understanding that the magic of their lives is in their own hands. What they build is theirs.

We heard on every hand, whenever we asked about one problem or another: "It's in the plan." It's in the plan. It will be.



# Book Reviews

## SCIENTIST AND MAN OF LETTERS

MIKHAIL VASILYEVICH LOMONOSOV belongs to that rare company of great men to whom it is given to create anew the culture of their countries. What Descartes and Bacon did for France and Britain in the seventeenth century, what Leibnitz did for Germany at the beginning of the eighteenth, Lomonosov did at the mid-century. But because Russia of the period just after the reforms of Peter the Great was a very different country from those of the highly commercialised and cultivated Western Europe, his task was correspondingly much greater and his achievement more remarkable. Russia, indeed, with its wide spaces and great resources, had more resemblance to the new world of America, and Lomonosov's character and achievements resemble more closely those of his great contemporary Benjamin Franklin. They were alike intensely practical, vital personalities of unceasing activities and unlimited interests. Both had the same cast of mind, inquisitive, liberal, with a passion for education and the improvement of their countries. There the resemblance ends. Franklin worked among a community of pioneer farmers and traders, just feeling their way to independent power, Lomonosov in an autocracy, resting on a serf-owning aristocracy.

He himself came from right outside it, the son of a free fisherman from the White Sea, and had to fight his way to education and into the new Academy. There he was the first native Russian in an assembly of imported foreigners, mostly German. Most of the rest of his highly combative life was spent in fighting for the right of his own people to education, to culture and to science. He created the Moscow University

and built the first teaching laboratory not only of Russia but of the world. His scientific achievement was of the first order. Free from traditional prejudice, he had a comprehensive view and could plan science in a manner 200 years ahead of his time. He invented the term Physical Chemistry and drew up a programme for research, much of which has still to be carried out. He established, forty years before Lavoisier, the law of constancy of weight in chemistry, distinguished atoms from molecules and regarded heat not as a substance but as a form of molecular movement. He was, besides, a geographer, a mineralogist and the creator of the glass and porcelain industries in Russia.

But these were but a part of his achievements. In his poems and plays, he virtually recreated the Russian language as a cultural medium and was the pioneer of the great literary movement which was to rise to such great heights in the next century. Above all, he was a man and a Russian; big, strong, violent, devoted to his friends and unsparing to his enemies, or, as he put it: "to strive until my death with the foes of Russian learning.... I have stood for it from my youth and in age I will not abandon it".

We have at last in English an account\* of the prodigious life of this hero of science, largely unknown outside his own country, and even there forgotten but for the labours of the author of this book, the late B. N. Menshutkin, who, from 1904 onwards, unearthed from archives most of the materials on which this life is founded. It is written modestly

\*RUSSIA'S LOMONOSOV. By B. N. Menshutkin. (Princeton U.P. and Oxford U.P., 25/-.)

and, though too short to deal adequately with its subject, gives a vivid picture of Lomonosov and his times. The translation is adequate but for one point. Foreign scientific names have been transliterated from the Russian and have become almost unrecognisable in the process.

There is no fear that Lomonosov will now ever be forgotten. He lives as an inspiration to his countrymen and his monument stands as the great University on the Lenin Hills which now towers over the Moscow where he worked as a penniless student 200 years ago.

J. D. BERNAL.

### A DULL HISTORY

THIS huge text-book\* is rarely more than superficial. For the most part it is a rather pedestrian account of facts already available to the English-speaking reader in the text-books of Pankratova and Lyashchenko. It shows no sign of original research or thought on the problems of Russian history.

While it is of value as a compilation of the basic dates and events, it should be used with caution.

It skimps the early periods, reaching 1682 in a breathtaking rush in the first forty pages. On the Kiev state, it repeats the usual errors. It tells us that the *Rus-skaya Pravda*, the early medieval law-codes, "gave recognition to slavery as a basic institution and to commerce as a basic activity" (p. 16), ignoring the clear picture given in those codes of early feudal estates worked by dependent peasants. It treats the growth of towns as entirely the result of foreign trade (pp. 8-9), not mentioning the remarkable expansion of urban economy in the twelfth century, when foreign trade was ebbing.

There are some remarkable omissions. Ivan the Fourth appears without his *oprichnina*, that remarkable attempt to overcome Russia's sixteenth-century backwardness (p. 30). The most important seventeenth-century document, the *sobornoye ulozheniye* (code of laws) of 1649, is dismissed in a line and a half (p. 35). Peter the Great appears without his Urals iron mines (pp. 76-77).

The author's political bias, nowhere as acute as that of many other contemporary American writers on Russian history, appears most in his chapters on the Soviet Union. He tells us, for example, that "even the publication of the Moscow telephone directory was discontinued" on security

grounds (p. 592); unfortunately for him a new edition of this directory was published this summer. His bibliography of works on the USSR omits all mention of Dobb and Rothstein, and while he goes out of his way to state that the Webbs' *Soviet Communism* "suffers from uncritical acceptance of official statements", he utters no caution in recommending anti-Soviet writers such as Barmine and Kravchenko, and even encourages us to regard Dallin and Nikolaevsky's notorious book as "the fullest treatment of a controversial subject".

R.W.D.

### PAVLOV THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS

PAVLOV'S ambition was to unite the subjective and the objective. He sought to make of psychology and physiology one discipline, or at least to bring the two into close working relationship. He also aimed to make his researches the basis of a rational therapy in mental disorder. A new book entitled *Conditioned Reflex Therapy*\* must therefore rouse the interest of those who hope to see the development of such a therapy.

Frankly, they will be disappointed. Mr. Salter raises our hopes when he explains the inadequacy of the psycho-analytic and the Gestalt schools as having no material or scientific basis for therapy. But, having declared his allegiance to Pavlovian teaching, however, he proceeds to revise it in a most remarkable and wholly unscientific way. Few would disagree that, in view of the length of time since much of Pavlov's work was done, it must now be further developed and added to. Salter does not do this. He strikes right at the root of Pavlovian doctrine by declaring: "The basis of life is excitation."

For Pavlov, the basis of higher nervous activity lay in the constant interplay between excitation and inhibition. This is the whole dialectic of Pavlov's theory. It is quite impossible in Pavlovian terms to think of one without the other. It would be as sensible to declare that in a motor-car what really matters is acceleration, whereas brakes are of little importance, or indeed, they are a nuisance!

Mr. Salter goes on to develop his remarkable thesis at considerable length. There is, however, little depth to his exposition. Some of his argument may be difficult to follow for an English reader, thus: "The excitatory person is never a stuffed shirt." Even when the English is clear the thought content is not always so, thus: "... engineers in their preoccupation with matter lose the essence." Perhaps the reader need not worry overmuch about this, since Mr. Salter assures him that "The happy person does not waste time thinking"! Some idea of Mr. Salter's

\*RUSSIA: A HISTORY. By S. Harcave. (Lippincott, 60/-.)

\*CONDITIONED REFLEX THERAPY. By A. Salter. (Allen and Unwin, 20/-.)

philosophy may be gained from the fact that he wants us all to become "excitatory persons" and goes on to state that "all the excitatory person wants is what is coming to him".

One hopes that even in his own country some of Mr. Salter's readers will disagree with some of his more offensive remarks, such as: "A woman wants a husband who is a cross between a gigolo and a long-shoreman"; or "Man is emotionally an animal who obeys the same laws and impulses as any primitive brute."

Mr. Salter uses his version of Pavlov's teaching as a basis for his thesis that "we do not control ourselves" and that "there is no need for the subject to do anything about it". This is also a perversion of Pavlov, who never denied the importance of conscious thought. It is quite incorrect to suggest, as Salter does, that conditioned reflexes necessarily operate in an automatic manner. On the contrary, in man, all reflexes operating through the secondary signalling system, that is by means of words, do quite clearly operate through the medium of consciousness, and it is precisely the physiological device of consciousness which makes possible an appropriate choice between the demands of different stimulus response patterns, which throughout our waking lives continually interact with each other.

Pavlov put forward his practice and theory as affording a physiological basis for learning, among other forms of higher nervous activity. Any such theory must postulate chains of reflexes. If human behaviour is to be interpreted in terms of conditioned reflexes there must be many thousands of such chains. These more elaborate forms of conditioned response must always initially be mediated through consciousness, though a very ingrained stimulus response pattern, for example a habit such as stepping on to a bus of a particular number at a given time, may make very little demand on consciousness. We are, however, able subjectively to confirm what Pavlov objectively established, namely that distracting external stimuli may interfere with the established pattern and inhibit the reflex or interfere with its proper execution; thus, if we are worried or upset, so that we are not thinking what we are doing, we may step on to the wrong bus. We are all aware of occasions when, in similar circumstances, we have felt our grip of the situation slipping and we have made a conscious, and at least partially successful, attempt to pay attention. Salter presents reflexes as though they were something happening outside consciousness. Any psychological theory based on Pavlov must show reflexes as operating through and forming the basis of consciousness. In such a theoretical framework volitional and rational behaviour is not only possible and desirable but its

scope can be gradually extended. Salter's assertion that conditioned reflexes in human beings do not involve volitional thinking is thus completely at variance both with Pavlovian teaching and with everyday experience.

Having dismissed psychoanalysis, Salter proceeds to reiterate the Freudian argument on the basis of his revised "Pavlovian" theory, but in terms much cruder than those which most psychoanalysts would use, thus: "Excitation is a matter of emotional freedom and has nothing to do with social participation." He resuscitates the super-ego and the id which he has just annihilated, by attributing all the misery in the world to the inhibition in childhood by the parents (representing "civilisation") of the child's natural reflexes. Salter says not one word about the reflection in the mind of social conflicts as a basis for unhappiness.

Mr. Salter's choice of General Eisenhower as an example of an excitatory, i.e. well-adjusted personality is significant and may be linked with the statement, "He (*the excitatory person. B.K.*) likes people, yet he does not care what they think"!

It is doubtful whether Mr. Salter's statement that "unless a personality gives the total impression of the American general or of the English Cockney, it may be considered less than excitatory," will commend him to Londoners.

B. KIRMAN

#### NEW TRANSLATIONS OF TURGENEV

THE new translations of two of Turgenev's novels\* are very handsomely, even luxuriously, brought out. They are of a rather large size, with many full-page illustrations of the pastel genre and the author's portrait by Repin as a frontispiece to one of them. The dust-jacket of "Fathers and Sons" is particularly attractive with its reproduction of the illustrations in the form of a portrait gallery. One is the more reluctant to have to say that the text of the translation does not deserve this setting. It has all the faults which have been more than once pointed out in recent translations from the Russian: disregard for the author's style, unhappy choice of words (*neoteric* for *modern*), americanisms, clumsy constructions at times quite meaningless ("launched him on a civil walk") and downright mistakes (*vindicative* for *vindictive*). If these two volumes are only the first of a complete new series, one can only hope that the English reader's friendly criticism will be taken into account before it is too late.

T.S.

\*FATHERS AND SONS. A NEST OF THE GENTRY. By Ivan Turgenev. (FLPH/Coll-ets, 8/6 each.)

A SYMBOLIST'S DOSTOYEVSKY  
PROFESSOR BOWRA'S foreword in which he introduces Vyacheslav Ivanov as

the distinguished poet and classical scholar he was (it may be added that he wrote his dissertation *De societate vectigalium* in Latin) has one important omission—V. Ivanov's eventual conversion to Roman Catholicism. As V. Ivanov's study of Dostoyevsky\* is mainly on the metaphysical plane, this fact is important for the understanding of his particular treatment of his subject. He says (p. 118) that his purpose was "to play the modest role of an interpreter, but of one who has his own particular interpretation". This claim is misleading, for much of the book consists of metaphysical propositions put forward by the author, to which his subsequent analysis of Dostoyevsky and the characters created by him serves merely as an illustration. This method makes it often difficult to distinguish where the author's personal *credo* ends and his interpretation of Dostoyevsky begins. His symbolistic style, which draws freely on a rather mixed Pantheon, renders his meaning still more obscure to readers who are not adepts of esoteric literature. The most accessible part of the book is the first of the three into which it is divided (*The Tragedic Aspect*). It contains some interesting points, such as the comparison of the inner construction of Dostoyevsky's novels with that of the Greek tragedy. The last two parts (*The Mythological Aspect* and *The Theological Aspect*), which form the greater part of the book, leave one with the impression of tormented shadows on an Apocalyptic background. The Dostoyevsky of that fantastic world is the visionary, and even his deeply human condemnation of "sinning" against children is mystically transposed into "such sublime glorification of the heroic child-martyr that we are entirely consoled and bless his obscure sacrifice as a source of immeasurable comfort". It is interpretations such as these that have fostered the unwholesome theory of "the Russians' love of suffering", which was particularly exploited in the writings of the Nazi Alfred von Rosenberg before he applied it during the occupation of Soviet territories.

Throughout the book one can easily discern through the veil of allegory how much V. Ivanov is out of tune with the living Russia, until finally (p. 144) he bursts out in an open condemnation of "all modern Russia" for having flown from Ahriman to Lucifer. Lucifer stands with Ivanov for any human happiness achieved in other ways than such as have his blessing. That is why instead of finding comfort in seeing come true one of Dostoyevsky's happier visions (which he quotes himself): "in the future even factories will be surrounded by gardens", he seeks it in the cryptic announcement that "Hagiocracy is already

\*FREEDOM AND THE TRAGIC LIFE: a Study in Dostoyevsky. By V. Ivanov. (Harvill Press, 16/-.)

preparing the way for the free Theocracy".

The translation of this strange book seems quite competent.

T.S.

### AN UNSATISFACTORY SELECTION

THE publication of this translation of selected Soviet essays on Spinoza\* is to be both welcomed and regretted. It is to be welcomed because the translator, Dr. George Kline (Ph.D., Instructor in Philosophy at Columbia University) is obviously making an honest attempt to render Soviet philosophical material available to English-speaking readers, and at the same time to understand and evaluate Soviet philosophy for himself. It is to be regretted because the selection is far from satisfactory, and because in his Introduction Dr. Kline has still a long way to go before he can understand what contemporary Soviet philosophy is about. In his well-known speech at the Soviet philosophical workers' conference in 1947†, A. A. Zhdanov said that the scientific study and assessment of the great philosophers of the past must be "a creative and not a scholastic work. It should be directly linked with the tasks of the present, should lead to their elucidation, and should give the perspective for the further development of philosophy".‡

It is, of course, from this point of view that Soviet study and appreciation of Spinoza, one of the greatest and most influential of all the bourgeois philosophers, proceeds. And from this point of view the Soviet assessment is made of Spinoza's great contribution to the progressive materialist heritage of human thought, of the class roots of Spinoza's philosophy, and of those features of his thought that are false and must be superseded.

Unfortunately, Dr. Kline has selected for translation only a group of essays on Spinoza written as long ago as the 1920s, though the last essay does come within twenty years of the present—1932. The essays are certainly interesting. But Soviet philosophy, and in particular Soviet studies in the history of philosophy, have moved forward since they were written, and they cannot possibly be accepted as reliable statements of the considered judgment of Soviet thinkers.

In varying degrees, these essays are infected by the scholastic approach to the history of philosophy against which Zhdanov warned and against which

\*SPINOZA IN SOVIET PHILOSOPHY. A Series of Essays. Selected and Translated and with an Introduction by George L. Kline. (Routledge and Kegan Paul, 25/-.)

†See ON LITERATURE, MUSIC AND PHILOSOPHY. By A. A. Zhdanov. (Lawrence and Wishart, 3/6.)

‡Op. cit. p. 77.



Marxist students of the history of philosophy have been struggling for years.

The whole discussion in these essays turns in fact partly on scholastic questions of interpretations of text—what exactly did Spinoza mean by the word *God*? was he really an atheist? did he affirm or deny the reality of time and change? and so on—and partly on disputes about labels—was Spinoza a materialist, and, if so, was he more of a mechanical or of a dialectical materialist?

These essays certainly establish the case that Spinoza belongs to the champions of modern materialist scientific thought. Scarcely at all, however, do they succeed in relating Spinoza historically to the social developments and class struggles of his time. Even less do they lead us to “the direct linking” of the study and appreciation of Spinoza “with the tasks of the present”.

Readers and admirers of Spinoza will find these essays, so far as they go, scholarly and thought-provoking. But they should on no account be accepted as a fair sample of the Soviet method of approach to the history of philosophy and to the great philosophical figures of the past.

MAURICE CORNFORTH

#### ESSAYS ON NEGOTIATION

A BOOK written and published in the USA in 1951, bearing this title\*, might be suspected of forming merely part of the American government campaign to work up and maintain ill-will towards the Soviet Union among the general American public—to express it in slang, to be “just what the witch-doctor ordered”; for there would be no particular reason for writing a full-sized book on such a topic if it were not expressly or impliedly suggested that to negotiate with the USSR presented especial difficulties or even impossibilities.

Three of the ten articles or essays which constitute the book (Nos. 1, 8, and 10) confirm one's worst suspicions in this direction, for they are little better than a stream of misrepresentation and abuse. The remaining seven contributions are by no means as bad. That of Mr. John N. Hazard, dealing with negotiations under Lend-Lease, is both sensible and constructive: one feels that he was genuinely able to negotiate with the Soviet officials, and they with him.

A number of the other contributors depart from what I take to be the primary purpose of the book, that of discussing negotiation *methods*, i.e. how one can, or should, or cannot, or should not, negotiate with the Soviet Union, and devote themselves almost entirely to giving narratives

of the negotiations in which they took part. The narratives are not uninteresting in themselves, but one wonders for what particular reason such narratives should be published, often a long time after the events.

In spite of the worst efforts of some of the contributors, the reasonability of the Soviet negotiators emerges clearly; it sometimes has the air of escaping in spite of precautions, and sometimes seems rather to escape with the writer's connivance. (At any rate, it is not always “shot while attempting to escape”!)

There are three general comments to which one is moved by this really rather unimportant book. The first is that it gives little exposition or even understanding of the principles that underlie negotiation, and in particular of the need for a socialist state, bargaining with capitalist states, to be highly suspicious of any suggestions that are put forward, and to hold tenaciously to every point of principle. The second is that, reading the articles now, often long after the events with which they deal, one constantly finds that the criticisms of the standpoint taken by the Soviet negotiators have been answered by the passage of time; that is to say, subsequent events show how very wise it was of the Soviet officials to stand firm as they did. The third comment is that it is really terrifying to realise that nine-tenths of those Americans who play an important part in estimating what the Soviet Union is thinking or doing, and in deciding what the American government should think or do in relation to the Soviet Union, have not the faintest conception of the Soviet Union, its principles, or its actions. If they sought to drive a car with a similar degree of knowledge, they would run off the road in the first fifty yards.

The book is published by the World Peace Foundation, and the joint editors are the Director of that body and the President of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. I trust that they believed that they were serving the cause of peace.

D. N. PRITT

#### A MAGNIFICENT WORK

THE author of this\*, the only work of its kind which has almost reached completion, died in 1918, having published the work in two volumes as far as the word *suleyá*. But he left in manuscript the matter of the third and final volume of a truly magnificent work: and it is the publication of this final instalment by the Soviet Academy under the editorship of Academician S. P. Obnorsky in 1949 which sug-

\*NEGOTIATING WITH THE RUSSIANS. Ed. R. Bennett and J. E. Johnson. (World Peace Foundation, Boston, USA, \$3.50.)

\*ETYMOLOGICAL DICTIONARY OF THE RUSSIAN LANGUAGE. By A. G. Preobrazhensky. (Columbia University Press and Geoffrey Cumberlege, £5/7/6.)



gested to the promoters of the American Russian series *Columbia Slavic Studies* the most welcome idea of publishing in an excellent photographic reproduction all three volumes together in one, under the supervision of the Series' general editor Professor Ernest Simmons. Only the portion between *Suleyá* and *Télo*, the manuscript of which had been lost when the Soviet Academy's publication of the final volume took place, remains missing.

Professor Obnorsky explains in a prefatory note to the Moscow edition of this final volume that its spelling has been brought up to date (the rest remains in the pre-revolutionary orthography): and the Soviet volume forms the first of a new linguistic series entitled *Works of the Institute of the Russian Language*. In the American complete one-volume edition before us, therefore, there is the inevitable disadvantage of having the dictionary up to *Suleyá* in the old spelling (both of Russian and of the Bulgarian words cited in illustration), while the rest has been modernised for both languages.

The American publication is a photographic reproduction of the Russian text of the *Etimologicheskoy Slovar' Russkogo Yazyka* just as it stands, including the separate pagination of the three volumes and some introductory matter prefixed to each: and in view of the extreme rarity of the work and of its fundamental importance, the high price of the whole is a just expense which every library and philological student of the Russian language must accept. As Professor Obnorsky explains, new methods have made some aspects of Preobrazhensky's work now out of date: but the very unfinished state of the dictionaries of Berneker and of Miklosich renders this book quite indispensable. Moreover, the new Russian dictionary which the Soviet Academy is now publishing (so far only up to the letter *v* has been covered\*) will not be ready for some years yet: so that all students will feel especially grateful to the Soviet scholar who has made the completion of Preobrazhensky's work possible.

This is an amazingly thorough and far-reaching dictionary, which shows in its ample and discerning illustrations a full and humane use of all the scholarship on its subject available up to the year 1918 when its author died. Brugmann, Meillet and all the West European Indo-European philologists then available have been well used as well as the Slavonic authorities: but there is an individual and vivid quality in many of the entries and in the criticism of speculation on the origin of obscure Russian words which makes the dictionary a pleasure for the philologist to browse in. Such originally non-Russian words as *dén'gi* (money) and *samovár*

provide amusing observations: and in treating the "taboo word" *medved'* (bear), which appears in so many regional dialects as *ved'med*, Preobrazhensky does not omit to place the traditional Russian popular etymology "honey-knower" beside the now more philologically acceptable "honey-eater".

Generally the reproduction has come out excellently, though there are inevitably occasional smudges or faintness: and the single volume, containing all three of the original, remains very convenient for use. There are some explanatory introductory notes in English at the beginning which indicate the exact relationship of the present edition to the original Russian publications. The whole emphasis of the work being on etymology, the student should not expect to find special value in the definitions of meaning. For these, as the already published fascicles of the Soviet Academy's *Dictionary* show, he must wait for the more modern authority.

C. L. WRENN

### THE JEWS IN RUSSIA

BOOKS on the history of the Jews in Russia before or after the Revolution are very few, and mostly inadequate because they treat the history of the Jews in isolation from the history of Russia in general. This present book\* is a welcome one. While it does not claim to have examined archive material or gone to many sources, at least it is an extremely competent compilation based on the published material and presents a good summary of the position of the Jews in Tsarist Russia.

The author describes, on the basis of very authoritative material, how the Tsarist Government itself was deeply involved in the actual persecution of the Jews in Russia and had a direct hand in the pogroms that swept the country from 1881 to 1917. To divert the growing discontent of the people and the revolutionary activities of the workers and peasants, the Tsarist Government resorted to pogroms. After the assassination of Alexander II in 1881, the Black Hundreds, on the direct orders of the Tsarist Court and Government, went from town to town in the Ukraine and plundered, robbed and killed many Jews. Every time the revolutionary movement was rising, the Government replied by way of pogroms. This was to happen in Kishineff in 1903 after a tremendous wave of peasant unrest in Bessarabia.

In addition to open naked pogroms, the Russian Government placed restriction after restriction on the Jews. Jews were forbidden to live in most parts of Russia; were not admitted to many industries,

\*THE JEWS IN RUSSIA, Vol. 2. The Struggle for Emancipation, 1881-1917. By Louis Greenberg (Yale University Press and Geoffrey Cumberlege, 20/-.)

\*V is the third letter of the Russian alphabet.—Ed.

and there was a very strict "*numerus clausus*" in the universities. Apart from these restrictions, Jews were hounded from those cities where they had already lived for many years, and were driven out from a number of cities by the police without any warning.

The author draws the correct conclusion that this was only the work of the Russian Tsarist Government and not the work of the Russian people as a whole: "The one comforting thought which brightens this gloomy picture is the knowledge that the Russian people themselves were not responsible for the hardships and cruelties imposed upon the Jews. The guilt for these injustices must be ascribed to the Emperor, Pobedonostsev, Ignatiev, and the small clique of court dignitaries who were in complete charge of Russian affairs. It has been established beyond a shadow of doubt that the pogroms of the eighties were not organised by the local Christian population, certainly not by the thousands of peasants whom the government allegedly sought to protect from Jewish 'exploitation'." (p. 47)

The oppression of the Jews led many of them into the revolutionary movement because it was this movement, in all its facets, that fought against Tsarist autocracy and against the anti-semitic persecutions. Jews were found in large numbers in all the socialist parties existing in Russia at that time. The revolutionaries organised self-defence groups against the pogrom-makers, and allied the struggle of the Jews for emancipation with the struggle of the workers for the overthrow of Tsarist autocracy. But because the Jews were restricted to the area of the Pale of Settlement, and were prevented from entering heavy industry, a large number of Jewish workers congregated round the petty bourgeois socialist ideologies of the Bund and Poale Zion.

The author is right in stating that the revolutionary movement gave a new dignity to the Jewish people: "Through the spirit of the revolution against class and national persecution, the downtrodden masses achieved a new dignity. In the struggle against exploitation and Tsarist autocracy, the workers of the ghetto found themselves united not only with non-Jewish comrades in Russia but with a world-wide movement." (p. 155)

Lenin, in his famous lecture on the 1905 revolution, dealt specifically with the role played by Jews in the Russian revolutionary movement: "The hatred of Tsarism was directed particularly against the Jews. On the one hand the Jews provided a particularly high percentage (compared with the total of the Jewish population) of the leaders of the revolutionary movement. In passing, it should be stated to their merit that today the Jews provide a relatively high percentage of represen-

tatives of internationalism compared with other nations. On the other hand, Tsarism knew perfectly well how to play up the most despicable prejudices of the most ignorant strata of the population against the Jews in order to organise—if not to lead directly—pogroms, those treacherous massacres of peaceful Jews, their wives and children, which have raised such disgust throughout the whole civilised world."

Only the revolution of 1917 put an end to the persecution of the Jews and to their maltreatment, and the need for running away from the country stopped. Jews became equal in every sense of the word. They began to enter the heavy industries, the professions, without restrictions and live wherever they wanted, and today, under the constitution of the Soviet Union, no racial discrimination could be tolerated and nobody in their right mind would dream of instigating a pogrom on the Jews.

It is welcome that a book studying objectively the situation of the Jews in Russia in the last days of Tsarism and also their objective role in the revolutionary movement should have been published in the United States at the present moment.

C. ABRAMSKY

#### ULANOVA

RARE are the names of human beings whose bare mention evokes an instant sensation of delight, so that no matter what one's circumstances, surroundings or occupation, to hear them is to respond to a real, if transient, happiness. The name of the great Soviet ballerina Ulanova falls into this class, and to have seen her dance is an unforgettable experience. Unfortunately the number of Britons who have had, or are likely to have, this experience is extremely small, so that this translation\* of the Russian critic Bogdanov-Beresovsky's book will be read by those to whom she is hearsay only, who will inevitably contrast it with the many books about our ballet and ballerinas. The photographs with which it is illustrated are, with one or two exceptions, uniformly poor. The publishers have also, with a sporting British hit-or-miss technique, included a solitary picture of the young and now famous Moscow ballerina Struchkova, entitled "probably Raisa Struchkova". However, if we regard the pictures with some of that generosity we reserve for amateur snapshots, and leave the author alone with his subject, it is impossible not to derive instruction and pleasure.

The book is not a biography (it is regrettable that it does not contain more of Ulanova's own views on her art) but consists of a perceptive analysis of her various

\*ULANOVA AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE MODERN RUSSIAN BALLET. By V. Bogdanov-Beresovsky. (MacGibbon and Kee, 18/-.)

roles and of their relationship to the ballets of which they are a part. Not only does the reader gain valuable knowledge about Soviet ballets, but the roving searchlight of the author's authoritative comments illuminates many obscure passages of the classical ballets. For instance, his remarks on what is known here as the *Blue Bird pas-de-deux* from the *Sleeping Beauty* should be read and taken to heart by both audiences and dancers. All ballet critics have different methods of evoking the image of the dancer or scene they describe, and Bogdanov-Beresovsky's strongly-developed musical sense leads him to give fascinating pictures of Ulanova's relationship to the music she interprets.

"Ulanova dances love." This celebrated comment, made by another critic, is in a peculiar sense the sum of her remarkable achievement. Ulanova has great contemporaries, she does not reign alone in the Soviet ballet, as for instance does Fonteyn in the English ballet, yet she is perhaps the only living dancer to whom the word "genius" may be given without hesitation. Her dance has a flow, a radiance like ripples of light on the surface of water, an exquisite and tender expressiveness. She belongs to the moonlight, but it is the moonlight of May, when the colours only just withdrawn linger like a perfume about Giselle's little gravestone or Juliet's balcony. Warmth and hope, a belief in the nobility of human destiny, are implied in all her movements, so that while there are other ballerinas who are her peers in brilliance and virtuosity, none occupies her unique place in the affections of the Soviet people.

This excellent book conveys much of her quality and must leave those readers who have never seen her dance with the burning wish to do so.

I.M.

### SOVIET COOKERY TODAY

THE fine edition of the "Book of Tasty and Wholesome Food" recently published by the Soviet food industry\* is a further confirmation of what we saw with our own eyes during our September 1952 three-weeks' visit to the Soviet Union—shops filled with every variety of food in abundance, and, more important still, shops filled with ordinary people buying the food: fresh and cooked meats, fish, butter, sugar, eggs, fruit, vegetables.

The cookery book not only gives four hundred pages of every imaginable variety of dish, including special diets, but it also has—in addition to an excellent index and many succulent colour plates—some interesting introductory material, in the first forty pages, on choice of meals, vitamins,

proteins and so on, how best to prepare food to retain the maximum food-values, and an assurance that the Institute of Nutrition of the USSR Academy of Medical Sciences has studied and approved the book. It is an interesting sidelight that all the menus we studied at restaurants during our visit, wherever we went, had the calorific weight beside each dish.

Besides the great variety of dishes made from fresh food, there are recipes for the many uses to which tinned, bottled, preserved and quick-frozen foods may be put. This aspect of easy-to-make food in a land of extremes of temperature, where the middle-class housewife before 1917 had to pickle and bottle for the whole winter, is as important an event in the Soviet housewife's lightened work as is the very appearance of this book at this moment. Its publication testifies not only to food abundance in the USSR, but also to the ever-rising standard of living of Soviet people as a whole in terms of first-rate housing with modern up-to-date kitchens. Almost vanished now are the days of the shared kitchen with six primus stoves. That this is so is evidenced not only by the fine new blocks of flats that are being built, but also by the recipes given on p. 52—taken at random from thousands in the book—which on a primus or with insufficient ingredients would be virtually impossible.

E. FOX.

(See recipes on p. 52)

### THE PRINCE WITHOUT DENMARK

MARIE SETON has written an important book\*. The subject is exceedingly important—a man who was great in three fields: as a creator, achieving effects among the most powerful the cinema has ever reached; as a theoretician, applying his fertile and erudite mind to speculation and experiment that have boundlessly enriched scientific aesthetics; and as a teacher.

She has gathered an immense amount of material covering the life of her subject from childhood to his death, too early though already full of honours; archives of document and illustration from Eisenstein's pupil, Jay Leyda; her own reminiscences founded on a period of close acquaintance; and painstaking conversations and correspondence with others who knew the great director at one or other stage in his career.

The whole is written in an intense spirit of devotion and with considerable care. It is well organised, and extremely readable. Yet, is it a good book? I am afraid we must answer with all frankness, no, if the qualities we are looking for are a correct and discriminating assessment of character and a round perspective in

\*КНИГА О ВКУСНОЙ И ЗДОРОВОЙ ПИЩЕ. Nutrition Institute of the Academy of Medical Sciences. (Pishche-Promizdat/Collet's, 16/6.)

\*SERGEI M. EISENSTEIN: A Biography. By Marie Seton, with over 100 illustrations. (The Bodley Head, 35/-)

evaluating the stormy phases of his work.

For many who knew Eisenstein, it is impossible to think of him today without a painful sense of loss, and the nearness of many incidents, described with steam-roller ruthlessness, must raise a sense of inaccuracy in some vivid memories and open wounds that were better left to heal. This, however, is a defect that concerns principally a private circle. The more public weaknesses of the biography seem to me to be these:

First of all, despite the bitterness of his disappointment at the destruction of his Mexican work, and its terrible effect upon him, which Miss Seton in no wise exaggerates, Eisenstein was by no means so tragic and solitary a figure as depicted here. All in all he enjoyed life, as he enjoyed creation, immensely; and I think Miss Seton has allowed herself to be led astray by the subject's own mock-interest in psychoanalysis. She does not discriminate among his moods or realise when an attitude was assumed, deliberately or involuntarily.

Second, his theoretical battles are presented in the abstract, without the enviroing social key, which alone could enable proper judgment between himself and his antagonists. We read of changes in his thought, conflicts with "bureaucrats", lack of contact with "developments"—but all this happens in a void. After a description of the hardships of the civil war days, in the early chapters, the Soviet Union completely disappears, and Eisenstein's arguments, set-backs, triumphs of his last fifteen years might, for all this biography gives us of the background constantly shaping him, have happened anywhere. After all, Eisenstein was not by any means always right. This he knew, and grew gradually from the knowledge for all the reluctant egoism with which that knowledge was bit by bit admitted. The true interest of these conflicts lies in a dispassionate judgment of them, which is not Miss Seton's purpose.

Third, the definitive biography of Eisenstein will bring out much more clearly the contrast between the fate of the genius under capitalism and that of the genius in a growing socialist society that Eisenstein's own life-experience underlined.

I do not refer to the Sinclair-Eisenstein episode alone. This Miss Seton deals with on the whole very well, though I am not sure she realises how completely neither was more to blame than the other for the failure to agree—this was inherent in the whole ill-starred undertaking. (The brutal reliance on state and money power to exact without pity the last ounce of revenge to which his bond legally entitled him, shown by the *soi-disant* progressive financier in conducting his side of the quarrel, is another matter.)

What I do mean is this. The machine that corrupted Lubitsch, turned Griffith into a wasted and forgotten shadow, broke Stroheim and hates Chaplin unforgivingly because he uses the wealth he won from it as a shield to his integrity, is that same that nearly destroyed Eisenstein in his few months' sortie to the West. The community partnership between creator and audience, and co-operation among creators, into which Eisenstein, a true Dubedat born of pre-revolutionary bourgeois society, fitted only inaptly and piecemeal for all his intellectual eagerness to fit in, nevertheless saved him, preserved him as man and artist, rich in creative opportunity and performance to the very last.

Miss Seton's book is conscientious in design, fascinating in subject, valuable so long as its limitations are borne in mind. Better books must come. Meanwhile, this is the only one. It has the Prince (or some of him, anyway) though without Denmark.

IVOR MONTAGU.

#### A "CURATE'S EGG" PICTURE BOOK

THE title of this book\* suggests a cross-section of Russia today: but Lady Kelly and her son, who took the photographs in this book, appear almost without exception to have picked scenes of the old Russia.

Why, for instance, in plate 25, pick on such an ancient railway station and call it typical? Why select such a decrepit building as that on plate 30 and imply in the caption that it is the usual sort of house to be found around Pskov? It appears to be an old barn, not a house at all. And is it good reporting to show a bullock-drawn plough in a remote part of Georgia, but say nothing about the tractors and modern mechanised farming that are so widespread in the USSR?

True, Lady Kelly mentions "another Russia that I saw, too, a Russia of forever smoking factories, guarded railway bridges, immense aerodromes, barracks and propaganda posters". Is that a fair description of modern Russia? Could she not have seen and photographed new houses, new schools, clubs, parks, sanatoria, motor-cars and all the wide range of consumer goods that are becoming ever more visibly abundant?

The pictures are mostly of churches and monasteries, which appear to be the chief interest of the two photographers. It is a pity that the book did not rest at that, for many of the pictures of churches are really beautiful. They are amateur photographs, but good ones. There are technical faults, some of which could have been eliminated, but these are not serious, and there are examples of uninspired view-

\*PICTURE BOOK OF RUSSIA. By Marie Noële Kelly. (Country Life, 16/-)



points and bad lighting. As a collection of pictures of old churches, monasteries and palaces, however, it may well be unique outside Russia, and was well worth doing.

Lady Kelly's "scenes from everyday life in the capital, and in the villages and towns . . ." are not representative; indeed, such scenes grow daily rarer and rarer. Her captions are sometimes incorrect, or even tendentious, as when she writes of the "European quarter" of Tiflis, but she shows a fine appreciation of the cultural side of old Russia and of the restoration and repair in which national monuments are kept. The book is, however, much too one-sided to warrant its title.

J. ALLAN CASH

### THE MILLENNARY OF AVICENNA

THE millenary of the birth of Avicenna—the great Tadzhiik scholar—has recently been celebrated in a large number of countries. Cambridge University marked the occasion by a course of lectures delivered last year in Cambridge and now published.\*

The publication of such a course is a welcome initiative. It is especially welcome in this case because it is a valuable addition to the sadly neglected field of oriental studies, and also because of its subject. Far too little is known in this country, apart from a limited circle of scholars, of the contribution of oriental thought and science to the progress of European thought during the Renaissance, and of Avicenna's influence in particular on the development of thought and science in his own age and for centuries after him, in his own country and in Europe. A wider knowledge and appreciation of the contributions of other nations towards world civilisation is of tremendous importance for a better understanding between peoples and for world peace.

Cambridge University's tribute to Avicenna on his millenary consists of six lectures, four of which deal with a special aspect of his work: his place in Arab philosophy, his influence on Jewish thought, on the medieval scientific tradition, and on Western thought in the thirteenth century. The titles of the two others are *His Life and Times* and *Some Aspects of his Work*.

In the Editor's foreword to the book, the claim is made that it is intended to appeal to "all sorts and conditions of men", a laudable intention. This claim should not, however, be taken too seriously. Of the four lectures dealing with particular aspects of Avicenna's work, one only, on his influence on the medieval scientific tradition, succeeds in giving the reader

"of any sort or condition" a broad, and at the same time definite, view of his scientific work and influence. The titles of the three others: on his influence on Arab, Jewish and Western thought, promise more than they can give. They are narrowed down to specialised aspects of their specialised fields, which leaves uncovered, among other things, the background of Arab, Jewish and Western society at the time and the reason why Avicenna's influence was so important. More is learned about Avicenna's metaphysical speculations than about his real contribution to the development of philosophy, namely his approach to his subject and his rationalist system of thought.

The introductory lecture on his life and times leaves the reader uninformed about society in his time and about his own debt to the learning of his time and to the type of society that produced it.

Finally, the lecture entitled *Some Aspects of his Work* deals with his "Persian-ness", his originality and his sincerity of purpose, and only touches in passing on the fundamental aspect of Avicenna as a great thinker, his place among the "men who had faith in reason", who "believed truth universal, believed it eternal".

The book is carefully annotated and has value as a guide to further reading on the subject.

N.H.

(See ANGLO-SOVIET JOURNAL, Vol. XIII, No. 3—Autumn 1952—for a four-part symposium on Avicenna's life and work.)

### THE SOVIET STATE

THERE is a fairly well-established tradition of writing among the more respected of the political scientists of the west. They have tended to distinguish, in their writing about the state in general, or any state in particular, three interests: the idea of the state, the form of the structure, and what can be observed of its actual working. Rarely do they relate these together once having distinguished them.

This book\* has the great merit that, in addition to being the first full-length attempt by a Soviet writer to examine the Soviet state in these three ways, it goes a very long way to bring out their interrelations. The idea of the state is formulated by quotation from the great source-books of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin. These ideas are shown arising out of the practical experience of the writers. The collecting together and placing in their historical setting of all the important writings of Lenin and Stalin on the state

\*AVICENNA: SCIENTIST AND PHILOSOPHER. A Millenary Symposium. Edited by G. M. Wickens. (Luzac, 15/-.)

\*SOVETSKY GOSUDARSTVENNY APPARAT. [The Soviet State Apparatus.] By V. A. Vlasov. (Gosyurizdat, Moscow, 1951, 11 R.95 K.)



has produced a book which fills a large gap in Soviet political literature. (A short but important survey by A. Y. Vyshinsky is available in English: *The Teachings of Lenin and Stalin on Proletarian Revolution and the State*, published by Soviet News at 2/-.)

Indeed the book as a whole seems much richer in the detail and depth of factual illustration of the theme than the shorter, and therefore less satisfying, texts previously available. The question of Soviet democracy is handled much better because of this. For example, the overall picture is shown in the facts that, at the time of the elections of the members of the local Soviets in 1947, more than eight million people were engaged in the work of the electoral commissions alone, not counting the other millions taking part in the electoral campaign as tellers, leaders of agitation posts, and agitators. In the local Soviets of the RSFSR alone there are more than 200,000 standing committees with a membership of 563,000 elected deputies and about one million co-opted "active helpers". One realises much more substantially the real changes in the Soviet state which occurred at the time of the Stalin Constitution, with the statement that more than 500,000 young communists (of whom one-fifth were women) were placed in leading positions in the State and Party organisations during the period 1934 to 1939.

Stalin in 1950 referred to the "troglodytes" of political thinkers who argued,

after the revolution, that it was wrong to take over and use the "bourgeois" railways and rolling-stock. They were part of the "machinery of the bourgeois state" and therefore, it was argued, they must be smashed. These people, and many others, could not see the valuable Marxist distinction between the repressive machinery of the state (what Lenin called "special bodies of armed men") and the physical machinery for the organisation of essential services maintained by the state. The relative emphasis on these two changed sharply (as Stalin pointed out in 1939) after the first phase of development of the socialist state. The political, economic and cultural content of the Soviet state administration is far superior to the predominantly police regulatory character of the bourgeois state. The objective of the socialist state is the construction of communism; that of the bourgeois state is to keep order (or, as it is expressed in our Dominion constitutions, "peace, order and good government"). The Soviet state, it is shown, requires an ever higher standard of administration, more constructive leadership (and consequently the overcoming of bureaucratic methods of administration), individual responsibility and consistent checking at all stages of the fulfilment of the directions of the state, and a strengthening of the respect shown to the Soviet socialist law. These points are admirably brought out in the book.

M. HOOKHAM.

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## TWO SOVIET RECIPES

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### Apple Whip

**Quantities :** 6 whites of egg. One glass of sugar. 300 grammes (say  $\frac{3}{4}$  lb) of apples. 2 tablespoons of caster sugar if wished.

Wash apples well in cold water, cut into small pieces, remove pips, place in a pan with a little water, and bake. Sieve the baked apples, add the sugar to the resulting purée and cook, stirring all the time, till it thickens and will not pour from a spoon. Whisk the egg-whites to a foam. Fold the hot purée into this foam and mix well. Put the mixture into a well-greased pan, heaping up into a cone shape and smoothing the surface with a knife-blade. Cook in moderate oven for 10 to 15 minutes, until the whip has risen and is slightly browned. Sprinkle lightly with the caster sugar and serve at once without turning out, or it will collapse. Cold boiled or pasteurised milk, or cream, may be served as a sauce. (Tinned or bottled apple purée may be used instead of fresh apples.)

### Shchi

(Fresh Cabbage Soup)

**Quantities :** 500 grammes (say  $1\frac{1}{4}$  lb.) each of meat and fresh cabbage. 200 grammes (say  $\frac{1}{2}$  lb) each of root vegetables with onions, and of tomatoes. 2 tablespoons of butter. Seasoning

Prepare a meat stock. After an hour and a half to two hours remove the meat and strain the stock into a soup-pan containing previously fried root vegetables and onions. Add the meat and the shredded cabbage, and simmer for 30 to 40 minutes. 5 or 10 minutes before the soup is ready, add pepper, salt, bayleaf, to taste. *Shchi* may have potatoes and fresh tomatoes added; the potatoes, peeled and sliced, are added 10 to 15 minutes after the cabbage, the quartered tomatoes with the seasoning. Lightly browned flour may replace the potatoes.

## VISITORS' IMPRESSIONS

THESE\* are all accounts of the USSR as the authors saw it during brief visits in 1951 and 1952. "Quakers Visit Russia" records the visit of Mr. Leslie Metcalf, Professor Kathleen Lonsdale and five other leading members of the Society of Friends, to Moscow, Leningrad and Kiev in July 1951. It is the work of a sincere and earnest group who applied themselves singlemindedly to finding out at first hand what they wanted to know. Especially interesting are their impressions of the Churches and of the Peace Movement in the USSR. Mrs. Robinson, the well-known Cambridge economist, went to Moscow in April 1952 to attend the World Economic Conference. Her "Sketchbook" covers both the Conference itself and her impressions of the Moscow scene, including food shops, the theatre and the city's skyline. There is much shrewd observation and acute comment. Mr. Lamb, who is Warden of Walthamstow Educational Settlement, made his "Russian Journey" with the educationists' delegation in the summer of 1952. His pamphlet contains a special section on education (including some notes on adult education), but also—like Mrs. Robinson's—ranges over the whole of Soviet daily life as he saw it in Leningrad, Moscow, Kiev and Sochi. All three publications are of considerable interest and value.

B.P.

\* QUAKERS VISIT RUSSIA. Ed. Kathleen Lonsdale. (Friends Peace Committee, 3/6.) CONFERENCE SKETCHBOOK. By Joan Robinson. (Heffer, 2/6.) RUSSIAN JOURNEY. By Ray Lamb. (Local Committee of Friends Hall, Walthamstow, unpriced.)

## PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

A STORY ABOUT A REAL MAN. Boris Polevoy. (FLPH/Collet's, 5/6.)

BYZANTIUM INTO EUROPE. Jack Lindsay. (The Bodley Head, 30/-.)

CHEKHOV: A LIFE. David Magarshack. (Faber and Faber, 30/-.)

ECONOMIC PROBLEMS OF SOCIALISM IN THE USSR. J. V. Stalin. (FLPH, 6d.)

REPORT ON THE DIRECTIVES OF THE 19TH PARTY CONGRESS. M. Saburov. (FLPH, 6d.)

REPORT TO THE 19TH PARTY CONGRESS. G. Malenkov. (FLPH, 6d.)

SAGA OF THE SERGEANT. V. Ivanov. (Methuen, Russian Readers Series, 4/-.)

SOVIET STUDIES, Vol. IV, No. 2, Oct. 1952 (Basil Blackwell, 9/-.)

SPARTACUS. Howard Fast. (The Bodley Head, 13/6.)

THE DECLINE OF IMPERIAL RUSSIA. Hugh Seton-Watson. (Methuen, 30/-.)

TWO SPEECHES. A. Y. Vyshinsky. (Soviet News, 3d.)

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# SCR NOTES

## LONDON MEETINGS AND OTHER EVENTS

September-December 1952

(All at 14 Kensington Square unless otherwise stated)

### September

- 23rd: Lecture. *Production Trends in the USSR*. Maurice Dobb. (**Social Sciences Section.**)
- 26th: Brains Trust. *Soviet Education 1952*. Members of SCR Education Delegation, at Friends House. (**Education Section.**)
- 27th: Michaelmas Dance. M.C. Donald Bisset.
- 29th: Lecture. *Michurin and Soviet Horticulture*. Academician P. N. Yakovlev, Director of the Agricultural Research Institute at Michurinsk. (**Science Section.**)

### October

- 2nd: Symposium. *Culture and the People*. Bernard Stevens, Doris Lessing, D. T. Richnell, Eleanor Fox. Chair: A. E. Coppard.
- 8th: Lecture. *An Architect Visits the Volga-Don Canal and Stalingrad*. John Pinckheard. Chair: Arthur Ling. (**Architecture and Planning Group.**)
- 9th: Lecture. *Soviet Discoveries in Siberia in relation to Prehistoric Connections between China and the West*. Prof. V. Gordon Childe. Chair: Dr. Joseph Needham. (**History and Archaeology Section.**)
- 16th: Lecture. *Soviet Labour Laws in Theory and Practice*. G. R. Barker. Chair: Dudely Collard. (**Legal Section and Social Sciences Section.**)
- 26th: Symposium. *The New Soviet Five-Year Plan*. Andrew Rothstein, Dr. S. M. Manton, FRS, D. T. Richnell, John Pinckheard, Prof. J. D. Bernal, FRS. Chair: Gordon Sandison. With Exhibition and Film Show. At Battersea Town Hall.

### November

- 3rd: Lecture. *Soviet Music Today*. Prof. Bernard Stevens. Chair: Leonard Cassini. (**Music Section.**)
- 6th: Lecture. *Mass Educability: Why Soviet Teachers are Opposed to Intelligence Testing*. C. G. T. Giles. Chair: Lady Simon of Wythenshawe. At Institute of Education. (**Education Section.**)
- 11th: Lecture. *An Artist in the USSR*. Pearl Binder. Chair: Mary Baxter, J.P.
- 13th: *Eisenstein*. Excerpts from his films, introduced by Marie Seton. Chair: Miles Malleson. (**Film Section.**)
- 14th: Musical Evening: programme of tape-recordings, introduced by D. T. Richnell. (**Medical Section.**)
- 24th: Lecture. *The Study of Greece and Rome in the Soviet Union*. Robert Browning. Chair: Miss N. M. Holley. (**History and Archaeology Section.**)
- 25th: Lecture. "Problem Children" in the USSR. Mary Baxter, J.P. Chair: D. T. Richnell. (**Education Section and Legal Section.**)
- 29th: ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, followed by Reception for Judith Todd. Dramatic Recital: *Soviet Theatre*. Andre Van Gyseghem and Ina De La Haye.

## December

- 6th: Question-and-Answer Meeting. *Soviet Literature and Drama*. Konstantin Simonov and Konstantin Fedin. Chair: A. E. Coppard. At Denison House.
- 8th: Lecture. *The Health Services in the USSR and China*. Dr. H. Joules. (**Medical Section.**)
- 10th: Lecture. *Soviet Work on English Mediaeval History*. Academician E. A. Kosminsky. At London School of Economics.
- 18th: Question-and-Answer Meeting. *Soviet Music*. Dmitri Kabalevsky and Emil Gilels. Chair: D. T. Richnell. Followed by reception.
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## Soviet Visitors

THE Society had the great pleasure of entertaining three distinguished Soviet guests for ten days in December: Academician E. A. Kosminsky, Konstantin Simonov and Konstantin Fedin. Arrangements were made for Academician Kosminsky to meet historians and to give university lectures on *Soviet Work on English Mediaeval History* in Oxford, Cambridge, Birmingham and London. Mr. Simonov was able to meet writers and university staff in Cambridge, Southampton and London. He and Mr. Fedin addressed six student meetings, and together they had long discussions with writers and teachers of literature. In spite of the fog they also answered numerous questions from SCR members and others at a well-attended meeting on *Soviet Literature and Drama* at Denison House. We were also delighted to welcome an old friend, Dmitri Kabalevsky, who was a guest of the British Soviet Friendship Society, together with other distinguished artists, Mr. Kabalevsky and Mr. Gillels answered questions at an SCR meeting on *Soviet Music*, and arrangements were made for them to meet composers and musicians. Altogether the Soviet visitors made a most valuable contribution to strengthening mutual understanding in the cultural field. A fuller account of the visit will be included in our next issue, and we hope also to be able to publish some articles from our guests.

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## SCR PROVINCIAL SECRETARIES

Readers of THE ANGLO-SOVIET JOURNAL may wish to get in touch with the Secretary of the local SCR Committee so that they may be kept informed of local SCR activities. The following list is appended for their convenience.

- BIRMINGHAM**: Mr. G. R. Barker, 349 Gillott Road, Birmingham 16.  
**BRADFORD**: Mr. Dennis Jackson, 17 Ashfield Place, Fagley, Bradford.  
**BRISTOL**: Mr. H. Gifford, 9 Westbury Court Road, Westbury-on-Trym, Bristol.  
**CAMBRIDGE**: Mr. B. Birnberg, Corpus Christi College, Cambridge.  
**LEEDS**: Mr. A. Dressler, Russian Department, The University, Leeds 2.  
**LIVERPOOL**: Mr. E. Dawson, Flat 3, 3 Hamilton Road, New Brighton, Cheshire.  
**MANCHESTER**: Mr. R. Barstow, 20 Cartwright Street, Audenshaw, Manchester.  
**NEWCASTLE**: Mr. F. H. Walker, 56 Moorside South, Newcastle-on-Tyne.  
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**SOUTHAMPTON**: Mr. A. L. Merson, 109 Ethelbert Avenue, Southampton.  
**YORK**: Mr. W. Coleman, 80 Monkgate, York.  
**SWANSEA**: Mrs. Farrington, 4 Bethany Lane, Westcross, Mumbles, Swansea.
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# *May Fair and Bazaar*

*In September 1950 the SCR held a Michaelmas Fair, with amusements, sideshows, refreshments, auctions and stalls selling all kinds of goods. We hope to repeat the great success of this convivial event this year towards the end of May. It is NOT too early for SCR members and friends to start NOW collecting things for sale, making suggestions for entertainments and sideshows and offering voluntary help in preparing and running the Fair. We want goods saleable at any price from a penny to ten pounds; we want materials for decoration and display ; and we shall want a great many volunteers for organising, arranging, catering and selling. If you can help in any way, please get in touch with SCR.*



# SCR

## New Translations, Bulletins and Surveys

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Please quote reference numbers. The prices in brackets are those for SCR members.

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**Architecture :** New Types of Building Materials. By A. N. Popov. Review of Soviet Architectural Journals. *Arch.* 33. 2/- (1/6).

**History and Archæology :** Some Recent Soviet Works on Ancient History. By Robert Browning. Conferences. Soviet Publication of English Work. Bibliography. *Hist.* 1. 2/- (1/6).

E. A. Kosminsky and English Mediaeval History. By R. H. Hilton. Soviet Historical Works in German and French Translations. Analysis of Contents of *Voprosy Istorii*. 1952. 1-8. Bibliography. *Hist.* 2. 2/- (1/6).

**Law :** The Constructive Role of Consequential Directions by the Soviet Court. How a Civil Case May Become a Criminal One. *Leg.* 26. 1/6 (1/-).

**Literature :** Recent Soviet Novels. The Soviet Short Story. News of the Soviet Literary Scene. History of Soviet Russian Literature. *WG* 3. 1/6. (1/-).

**Chess :** Set of Bulletins with Twenty-four Annotated Games from Helsinki. *Chess* 41, 42, 43. **Set** 3/-.

**Psychology :** Attention and its Development. By N. F. Dobrynin. *Psy.* 7. 1/6 (1/-).

**Science :** Science and Technology in the Fifth Five-Year Plan. Progress of Soviet District Heating. Notes on District Heating. The SCR Library. Origin of the Earth : Bibliography on Schmidt's Hypothesis. Notes and News. *Sci.* 1. 1/6 (1/-).

**Social Sciences :** Place and Function of the Press in Soviet Society. *Soc. Sci.* 3. 1/6 (1/-).

